

THE ACADEMY

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, SCIENCE & ART

No. 1734

JULY 29, 1905

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THE LITERARY WEEK

At the most timely moment, Messrs. A. and C. Black have produced in their series of coloured books, a volume on Abbotsford, with pictures by William Smith Junr., and a description by W. S. Crockett. The latter has found a task to his mind. He has a good understanding of Sir Walter Scott, and a native's knowledge of the country. To our mind, one of the most curious facts set forth in this book is that last year no fewer than 7000 visitors are recorded as having been at Abbotsford; yet people who have had the finest taste in their time had very little that was good to say of the place. Dr. John Brown, the author of "Rab and His Friends" called it "Ugly Abbotsford;" Ruskin, in spite of an admiration for Scott that stopped little short of idolatry, and a love of the beauty of the Tweed and of Melrose not exceeded by that of the Border Minstrel himself, said of Abbotsford that it was "perhaps the most incongruous pile gentlemanly modernism ever designed." Hugh Miller found it a "supremely melancholy place;" Dean Stanley said it was "a place to visit once, but never again"; George Gilfillan gave it the nickname "Castle Folly"; to Robert Chambers it was "a sad piece of patchwork"; and we all know the contempt that Carlyle felt for this expression of Sir Walter's taste.

On the whole we should be inclined to consider that those who have found so much fault were perfectly right. Scott's ambition seems to be a rather poor thing to this generation. At any rate, the literary man of to-day deems it a higher achievement to produce good work, whether it be in prose or verse, than to build an imitation of a mediæval castle, and to fill it with armour and curiosities belonging to no relatives of his, and therefore carrying no personal association. Probably the real reason of Abbotsford being such a favourite place of pilgrimage lies in the beauty and romance of the district. It is only one of many points of interest in what is perhaps the most romantic district of Great Britain. Melrose possesses a beauty that can never fail. So does Dryburgh, and most of the places commemorated in the verse of Minstrel Burne:

"Sing Ercildoune and Cowdenknowes,
Where Homes had ance commanding;
And Drygrange, wi' the milk-white yowes,
'Twixt Tweed and Leader standing.
The bird that flees through Redpath trees
And Gladwood banks each morrow
May chant and sing sweet Leader Haughs,
And bonnie howms of Yarrow."

The present beauty of the Tweed, too, is due in a large measure to Sir Walter Scott. He set the example of planting that has been so widely followed, with the result that all the country between Abbotsford and Norham Castle, which once was bare and treeless—save for clumps

of ancestral oak round some of the mansions—is now beautifully wooded. No doubt the number of literary pilgrims, too, is swollen by the facilities now possessed for getting about. For example, many people who own motor-cars are often at a loss for an excuse to go anywhere. It is rather a poor business to fly along the road at express speed with no definite aim, and accordingly they are in the habit of paying visits to places they would otherwise scarcely have dreamed of going to. Indeed, one of the most curious changes produced by the motor is that one can hear one's friends talking with the utmost familiarity about roads and lanes in neighbourhoods that would have been quite unknown to them except for the discovery of the automobile.

It would be extremely interesting if some one who is curious in the matter of figures would collect statistics of the visitors to other literary shrines in Great Britain. We know that Somersby, the quiet rectory in Lincolnshire, where the late Lord Tennyson spent his boyhood, is an attraction to a stream of visitors during the whole of the summer, but to the best of our knowledge no record is kept of them. Carlyle's still more remote home at Ecclefechan, in Dumfriesshire, the "auld hoose" in Ayrshire where Burns lived, and even the birthplace of James Thomson on the wild moorland north of Jedburgh, receive their quota of visitors. We would not like to say that they are all admirers or disciples of the writers whom they honour in this way, because observation of the manners and speech of such as we have come across has convinced us that in what is probably a majority of cases they are mere sight-seers, who are not very expressly interested in literature. The statement may seem illogical, but it is not made without chapter and verse. What an old lady of our acquaintance calls a "towrist" is a very curious animal, and his idiosyncrasies have not yet been studied with the minuteness that they deserve. One day he might become the subject of most interesting investigation.

Apart from the best of his tragedies, "Ion," perhaps Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd's chief claim to remembrance is that he first discovered to a wide public the beauties of Lamb. His Life of the essayist, fragmentary though it be, will always hold its place among other biographies, for his style was polished, and he treated his subject with a reticence and good taste which have not always been observed. The Memoirs were issued in two parts, the first, entitled "Letters of Charles Lamb, with a Sketch of his Life," in 1837, and the second, "Final Memorials of Charles Lamb; consisting chiefly of his Letters not before Published, with a Sketch of some of his Companions," eleven years later, Talfourd's sense of delicacy deterring him from dealing during the sister's life with the tragic side of Lamb's life. Talfourd was at one time connected with a Reading paper, through the proprietor of which he first made the acquaintance of Lamb; and as an advocate defended Edward Moxon when prosecuted for publishing Shelley's "Queen Mab."

Both he and his wife were intimate friends of Charles and Mary Lamb; and "Elia's" letter of congratulation to them on "a birth of the description which I think you both wished for" was included in the sale of autograph letters at Messrs. Sotheby's this week. Lamb wishes to know how mother and babe progress, and invites Sir Thomas (then Serjeant) Talfourd to visit him at Enfield so soon as is practicable.

"Will you," he asks, "bring the tragedian (and Tragedy) with you in your hands? I am sorry to add that (don't be frightened) just as the last Elia was ready for destruction there has come from Taylor, of the London, the threat to move of applying for an injunction, unless we compensate him for his copyright. The son of a — in a manger! neither to print himself nor let print."

It was John Taylor, editor, part proprietor, and part publisher of the *London*, who engaged Hood to sub-edit. But the paper, though it numbered many distinguished men, and the notorious "Janus Weathercock," among its contributors, had not then the appeal which it had at the time when Lamb was introduced by Hazlitt, and in his first contribution—a description of the old South Sea House where he had passed some months as a clerk—assumed the pseudonym "Elia," adopting the name of a gay foreigner with whom he had worked.

In the same sale is an amusing epistle from Hood, who commenced author on the *London*, to "My very dear Marianne," requesting her to store up his letters.

"It is not the fault of my wish," he says, "that I cannot make you Queen of the Amaranths or plant a bough of green leaves and turn them into emeralds for your casket. There is a tale of a little Prince who had a ruby heart, and whatever he wished on it was instantly granted, but it is not so with mine. Neither have I Aladdin's lamp, or it should have been scrubbed bright ere the Chelmsford Ball, but now it is a dark lantern, and the glory of Fairyland is bedimmed for ever, only the fiery dragons remain, which be cares many and fearful, and the black cat and the demons and imps and ogres, who are the book-sellers, except that they have no eyes in their foreheads."

It is characteristic of the man who jested even as he grappled with death.

A letter in which Carlyle gives characteristic advice to a minor poet:

"Young men who ask my advice in these times, I generally counsel not to write in rhyme or metre, but to try rather whether they can be poet on a basis of poetry and sincere reality."

would seem to have had its effect on the recipient, Ebenezer Jones, of whose poetry Mr. William Bell Scott wrote favourably in the *ACADEMY* of November 2 and 16, 1878. Carlyle's influence on Jones had caused him to adopt a rhetorical style which did not meet with approval, and, discouraged by the reception of his "Studies of Sensation and Event," he forsook the Muse, to scribble about politics. But in two poems, "When the World is Burning" and "Death," written towards the close of his life, the "basis of poetry and sincere reality" are fairly evident. "Death" may not be great poetry but there is pathos in these lines:

"In vain the young from youth's delights,
From lips whose kissing bloom
Bright chaos makes of days and nights,—
To thee defiant come.

"In vain the old with trembling tread,
And trembling hand applies,
And strives to coax thy silence dread,
And lifts beseeching eyes.

"And vainly I desert my post
In life's poor puppet-game,
To seek thee where this silent host
Of tombs thy power proclaim.

"In vain, in vain; but one reply
In thy sad realm I find:
Some fresh grave only meets the eye,
The ear some wandering wind."

An appeal is being made by the "Bret Harte Assistance Fund" on behalf of Bret Harte's daughter Ethel. Bret Harte died in poor circumstances, leaving his daughter totally unprovided for. Miss Bret Harte finds the struggle for a livelihood very hard. Her health has broken down at a time when she has been striving to earn her living on the concert platform and the stage. Any sums from 5s. upwards would be acceptable, and the names of the Committee, which includes Mr. George Meredith, Sir George Newnes, Sir Francis Burnand, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and others, guarantee the genuineness of the appeal. Subscriptions may be sent to the Honorary Secretary to the Fund, Dr. L. C. Alexander, of Holly Lodge, Upper Parkfields, Putney, S.W., or to the London and County Bank, Putney Branch.

The "entente" has caused the French journalists to write more than of old about English literature; but it has not yet caused them to write about it with absolute accuracy. We have just been glancing at an annotated introduction to a French translation of "De profundis," and have been startled by the havoc played with the proper names. Who is "Sir Jones"? Apparently Mr. Henry Arthur Jones is meant. Who are the following: Ridder Haggard, Mrs. Humphrey Ward, Ralph Walter Emerson, Boswel, Sir Irving, Vilde? What has Sir Lewis Morris done that he should forfeit his title, and figure as Louis Morris?

So much for the spelling. Some of the "explanations" in the footnotes are even more remarkable. The description of Mr. Henry James as "the Bourget of the other side of the channel" may pass; but what are we to think of the description of Mr. Hall Caine as "the English Pierre Decourcelle"? The author of "The Eternal City" is perhaps being confounded with his colleague, Mr. George R. Sims. And what will the editor of the *Saturday Review* think of the description of his organ as "the English equivalent of the *Revue des deux Mondes*"? Nor is it only the living who are misrepresented. The illustrious dead also suffer. We are informed that Turner died in 1801, that Shelley was the author of "Endymion," that Max Müller, "after travels and excavations wrote 'Troy and its Remains,'" that "Literature and Dogma" was the work of "Thomas Arnold, a religious and philosophic writer of very early date," and that Colenso "wrote a Pentateuch which was condemned by a Synod." After this it appears a trifle to read of Mr. Smithers, the publisher, under the name of Smyders, and to be told that the word "shibboleth" is "a term of the masonic lodges." We had hoped better things than this from the "entente," but we shall go on hoping.

By the time these words appear in print the workman's pick will have destroyed the house in which Victor Hugo spent his declining years. It was in the Avenue d'Eylau (now Avenue Victor Hugo) and was an ordinary, two storied edifice, with dormer windows and a shady garden overlooked from his bedroom, where he wrote, standing, and slept without a pillow. The dining-room was a fine one, with a table for a dozen guests, who used to withdraw at nine o'clock into the red salon, where might be seen visitors from all parts of the world, and of every shade of opinion—the Emperor of Brazil, Mr. Parnell, Sir Charles Dilke, Gambetta, Rochefort, Leconte de Lisle, Renan, and even, on one occasion, a cabman, who had refused to accept his fare from Victor Hugo, and who turned out himself to have a turn for writing verse. Here, on another occasion, the enterprising manager of a circular tour brought a bevy of American ladies who, though they had no letter of introduction, managed not only to see the aged poet but to kiss him.

It was in this house that Victor Hugo died on May 22, 1885, in the presence of his grandchild, his secretary, and his son-in-law. The clock had just struck half-past one, but in the official account the time of death was given as twenty-seven minutes past one, it being declared that the clock was fast. Whence a controversy, droll and trivial in such solemn circumstances. For eight days people struggled to reach the door, when it was often necessary to wait two hours in order to sign one's name; yet, in spite of this, no less than five hundred signatures were left. So great was the number of wreaths that the house was filled with them, and they overflowed into the garden. Yet when the funeral procession left the house under the eyes of a million spectators, only two modest wreaths, given by the grandchildren, adorned the "pauper" coffin in which the "Father" of the people was laid to rest.

A further word about the Victor Hugo house in the Rue de la Tour d'Auvergne, to which the Society of Hugophiles

has now ceremoniously affixed its plaque. There, as the inscription is to recall to our memory, the policeman came to arrest the poet on the evening of December 2, 1851. Madame Hugo opened the door, assured her visitor that her husband was out, and invited him to search the house if he doubted her word. He withdrew, saying that he would return, and Hugo, as it happened, did not come home till morning. Hearing what had happened in his absence he did not stay there, but concealed himself for a week in the houses of his various friends, departing for Brussels on December 11, in the disguise of an artisan, protected by a false passport procured for him by his brother-in-law, Victor Foucher, then a Counsellor at the Court of Cassation.

The decree of expulsion did not appear until January 14, 1852. It banished seventy-six popular representatives, and Victor Hugo's name was fifteenth on the list. He was soon requested to leave Brussels in consequence of the representations of his Government, and found his way, as all the world knows, to Hauteville House. On August 16, 1859, after the victory of Magenta, he, with the rest of the exiles, was amnestied, but replied with a manifesto: "No one will expect me, as far as my own case is concerned, to pay an instant's attention to the thing called amnesty. In the present condition of France protest, absolute, inflexible and eternal, is my duty. Faithful to the engagement which I have taken with my conscience, I shall share the exile of liberty until the last. When liberty returns to France I will return to it also."

This was the heroic attitude. Whether heroism distinguished his conduct while the Revolution was in progress is a question upon which his own recollections differed from those of some of his companions. He has himself described how, at the time of the *coup d'état*, he thrust his head out of the window of an omnibus and reproached the soldiers for butchering the people. There is, however, another version of that story, told by another member of the Chamber of Deputies who was in the omnibus at the time. "The incident undoubtedly occurred," says this witness, "but Hugo has misstated his own rôle in the matter. It was not he but I who harangued the soldiers from the window of the vehicle. Hugo's part consisted in tugging at my coat-tails and imploring me to keep quiet for fear lest we should all be massacred." Far be it from us to decide which of the deponents is the witness of truth.

To return to the house. It may be interesting to mention that there is a description of it (and of its furniture) quite in the *Celebrities at Home* style, written by Théophile Gautier, the first of the Hugolaters. We gather therefore that Hugo anticipated Zola in his passion for living in a museum of objects of bigotry and virtue. Some details might perhaps be obtained from the *conciierge*—an old gentleman of ninety-five who was present at the inaugural ceremony.

Hugolatry itself is perhaps a subject which invites reflection. The least critical of us can see that the enthusiasm which the name of Hugo continues to evoke is out of all proportion to his importance as a literary force. Balzac and Flaubert—to name no others—were both greater from that point of view. Such ceremonies as take place in their honour, however, are of a cold literary character. Ceremonies in honour of Hugo have all the splendour and solemnity of acts of public worship. The reason doubtless is that in Hugo every Frenchman feels that he recognises the magnified image of himself. To those who are not in sympathy, his resonant eloquence may suggest the hollowness of the drum. To his countrymen he appears as the clear-cut exaggeration of the French type—the average Frenchman magnified to the heroic scale. Their attitude towards him, therefore, whether they read his works or not, has a close likeness to that of many Englishmen towards Gladstone.

The same phenomenon, in its appropriate degree, exists in almost every literature. Everywhere we find some writer exalted to a pinnacle beyond his strict deserts because his personality seems to mirror and to glorify the national habit of mind. Perhaps the intense Scotch reverence for Burns is to be so explained. Certainly it is largely because he was so very English—so redolent of Christmas and plum puddings—that the memory of Dickens has a vitality denied to that of Thackeray, and is kept alive by Fellowships and other Societies. The Germans, for the same reason, are more exuberantly enthusiastic about Schiller than about Goethe; and in the same category fall the Flemish enthusiasm for Henri Conscience, the Spanish enthusiasm for Señor Galdos, the Hungarian worship of Maurus Jokai, and the Norwegian preference of Björnson to Ibsen. These cases furnish the true analogues to the vogue of Victor Hugo.

In one respect, however, Victor Hugo surpassed them all. Even when handicapped by translation, he could compete successfully with the most popular writers of other countries. Not long ago the present paragraphist was discussing "serials" with an editor who has been connected, for more than thirty years, with one of our leading illustrated weeklies. "As a rule," said the editor, "serials have no observable effect upon our sales. A good serial does not increase our circulation; an indifferent serial does not diminish it. I say this after printing serials by Walter Besant, by Rider Haggard, by William Black, by Thomas Hardy. But there have been two exceptions to the rule. Two serials have visibly stimulated the demand for the paper. Both of them were by Victor Hugo."

A correspondent writes: *A propos* of the article on "The Backbone of English" in the *ACADEMY* of July 15, if any one will try writing a jargon of English and French, using only French verbs, nouns, and adjectives in his framework of English articles, pronouns, adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions, it will be found that any Englishman can read it fairly well *without any knowledge of French*. A proof that English is rather Anglo-French, than an Anglo-Saxon. And he appends as an example the following paragraph among others, "written according to the rules of the Anglo-Franca method":

"The creation of a universal langue for the international relations of peoples is a question much controverted. While philosophes have regarded it as a lien of union and of concorde, and a puissant levier of civilisation, litterateurs and poetes are in accord in opposing it, and many linguistes doubt, in our jours, the possibilité of composing an artificial langue having a reel pratique valeur."

A correspondent writes: Permit me a line to thank the writer of the interesting and admirable notice of Sir Henry Wotton in your last week's issue. All that is generally known of this notable Englishman is well summed up without dealing minutely with his ambassadorial merits and his routine work at Eton College; but I confess to a feeling of disappointment that no reference whatever is made to his acquaintance, short though it was and in the last year of his life, with John Milton and the exceedingly pleasant and clever letter he wrote the young poet on the eve of his departure on his well-known continental tour. More especially I refer to the interesting anecdote when Sir Henry was "tabled in the house of one Alberto Scipione" at Siena and the advice how one might carry himself securely in Italy in troublous times, viz: Signor arrigo mio pensieri stretti e il viso sciolto, a rule of conduct to carry one safely over the whole world!—advice which Milton neglected at Rome and nearly landed himself in "trouble." One likes to recall this meeting between the Nestor of diplomats of the day in his last year and the youthful poet whose early promise of greatness in "Comus" called forth the encomiums of the learned Provost—"a dainty piece of entertainment . . . wherein I should commend the tragical part if the lyrical did not ravish me with a certain Doric delicacy in your songs and odes wherein I must plainly confess to have seen yet nothing parallel in our language: ipsa mollities."

LITERATURE

EMILIA FRANCIS STRONG

The Book of the Spiritual Life. By the late LADY DILKE. With a Memoir of the Author by the Rt. Hon. Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, Bart., M.P. (Murray, 10s. 6d. net.)

ALL readers of this curious and interesting volume will agree that remarkable, as are the fragments given of Lady Dilke's own work, by far the most noteworthy portion of the book is the Memoir which, in the short space of little over a hundred pages, gives a vivid, imperishable picture of one of the most remarkable women of the Victorian era.

Emilia Francis Strong perhaps inherited that strain of character, without which genius counts for so little, from her paternal grandfather, that Samuel Strong who was one of the most sturdy among the United Empire Loyalists of Georgia. To this gallant defender of a lost cause Lady Dilke owed her striking physical presence, to which in youth was joined a personal beauty which caused William Bell Scott early in the sixties to write of her that she was one of the "most perfectly lovely women in the world"; doubtless it was from the same source that she obtained the vitality and high spirit which to the last seem to have been the qualities which most impressed those who came into temporary contact with her.

The happy accident that her father, after retiring from the Army, became connected with the Oxford branch of a banking firm, brought her from childhood into what was to be, in spite of her later strictures on Oxford and Oxford life, a thoroughly congenial atmosphere. Her friendship with John Ruskin, for example, was directly owing to the fact that she spent her early girlhood at Oxford. Some of her drawings were shown to him, and he strongly advised that she should be sent to South Kensington to study anatomy. Nearly thirty years later, after an intimacy only interrupted—but that for years—by Ruskin's keen anger at a signed criticism written by his one-time disciple, he wrote to her:

"I thought you always one of my terriblest, unconquerablest, and antagonisticest . . . powers. . . . My dear child, what have you ever done in my way, or as I bid? . . . I am really very, very, affectionately and respectfully yours—J. RUSKIN."

The letter led to an amusing little correspondence, in which the lady replied with some spirit:

"My dear Master.—So big a person as you ought to understand that others may and must receive from you much which must be dealt with according to their own character and circumstances."

A little later Ruskin, in writing to her, summed up oddly and characteristically his philosophy of art:

"To obey me is to love Turner and hate Raphael, to love Goethe and hate the Renaissance."

But, however antagonistic they were to prove to one another in the plane of thought of art criticism, Ruskin exercised a great personal influence on the beautiful, ardent girl whom he brought into the most cultivated and delightful stratum of London life—that which then gathered together each Sunday afternoon at Little Holland House. It was there that both she and her work attracted the enthusiastic admiration of G. F. Watts; there also that she renewed a childish acquaintance with Millais.

About this time—1858 and 1859—she seems to have worked very steadily at South Kensington. Oddly enough, Miss Strong and Sir Charles Dilke, he at the time a lad of sixteen or seventeen, won Queen's Prizes in the same year. It was about this time also that she developed the strong—some would call them almost morbid—religious feelings which took the form of extreme indulgence in what were then called Puseyite practices, including confession and penance. Those, however, who have had experience of the effect of religious emotion on a certain type of character, will understand that these practices were not incompatible

with a keen love of practical joking and of the accomplishing of some very daring girlish pranks, of which one actually caused Miss Strong to be brought before the Lord President and his advisers. A lieutenant of engineers had been attached for duty at the art schools, and this gentleman—he later became a distinguished general—had placed upon the official screen a notice that "the young lady who had taken away" his dog was instantly to return it to the owner. The students resented this aspersion on their honesty, and the future Lady Dilke expressed the general indignation, and also doubtless taught the young soldier a lesson, by affixing in her turn to the Government official notice-board a bill beginning: "Lost, strayed, or stolen, a sandy-haired puppy answering to the name of Lieutenant ——" The authorities contented themselves with meekly expressing the hope that nothing of the kind would happen again. This little story makes one understand why Ruskin described her as "the sauciest of girls," and also explains the kind of understanding humour which made her exclaim some forty years later after a long day of exertion spent in trying to make those about her happy:

"Perhaps, after all, I am making the comfortable uncomfortable, without making the uncomfortable any more comfortable!"

—a reflection some hostesses would do well to learn by heart.

The marriage of Emilia Francis Strong to the great scholar whose name she was to bear for over twenty years, took place in the September of 1861, at Iffley, and it would be deeply interesting to learn how so strange—and, we may be permitted to suggest without impertinence, so ill-assorted—a union came about. Sir Charles Dilke gives a pleasing picture of Mrs. Mark Pattison's intelligent devotion to her distinguished husband: up to the last many of their letters to friends were actually written jointly—she perhaps contributing the beginning, and he the end. He evidently dominated her mind, and her love of personal liberty did not interfere with her disciplined reverence for Authority, as represented by her husband. She kept, however, an imaginative side and part of her life in which Mark Pattison was not allowed to share, and to this she alluded—there is surely pathos in the simple phrase—as "Off hours of my own time."

Two famous novels are said to have had Mrs. Mark Pattison and the circumstances of her first marriage as heroine and framework. To one of these Sir Charles Dilke makes no allusion—and we take the opportunity of following his good example; to the other, "Middlemarch," he devotes careful analysis, indignantly denying that his wife sat, in any sense, for the picture of Dorothea Brooke. He goes so far as to say:

"The grotesque attempt to find a likeness between a mere pedant like George Eliot's Casaubon and a great scholar like Mark Pattison, or between the somewhat babelike Dorothea and the powerful personality of the supposed prototype, was never made by any one who knew the Rector of Lincoln and Mrs. Pattison."

One may, however, venture to point out that this is scarcely compatible with his admission that the religious side of Dorothea was taken from the letters of Mrs. Pattison, or again, that

"Casaubon's account of his marriage to Dorothea in the first book of 'Middlemarch,' is as a fact given by the novelist almost in Mark Pattison's words."

Lady Dilke deeply resented the supposed connection of herself with the novel; it was to her a distasteful subject, and on one occasion she assured a friend that she had been at some pains to avoid reading the book.

At Lincoln College Mrs. Pattison, as was natural when her many personal and mental gifts be considered, became a more than popular Oxford hostess, and she exercised, as many now living can testify, a good influence on those fortunate undergraduates who came within her ken. But she never allowed the social side of her life to interfere with the work she did for, and under, her husband, and she also kept up the unchanging habit of her life, that of

putting aside a certain portion of each day for thought. It was in these moments that "The Book of the Spiritual Life" first took shape. It was shortly after her marriage, also, that she began to write for publication, and became a constant contributor to the *Saturday Review*, and, some few years later, to the *ACADEMY*, where, in 1869, she became, as art editor, a regular member of the staff.

Lady Dilke was that rare thing in English letters—a really great and perceptive critic, and it seems almost a pity that she turned her critical faculties so wholly to art; it is impossible to read some of her work without realising how sure and unerring was her instinct for everything connected with literature. Indeed, for a time she contributed many of the literary notes to the *Westminster Review*, and in the *Saturday* she wrote much on general subjects, contributing, in the late sixties, a curious analysis of the then mystery—hypnotism.

But whatever it was at which she laboured, her work—as Sir Charles Dilke truly describes it—was Benedictine in its intensity and perfection. Again and again, from the year 1867 to that which saw her premature death, she had breakdowns in health which often necessitated her being abroad for long periods of time. And yet it was after her first two most serious illnesses that Mrs. Pattison did her most admirable work for the *ACADEMY*, signing many of her articles, which dealt with such important subjects—in addition to her regular art work—as German art-philosophy and Ruskin's Oxford Lectures, and taking an active part in the Holbein controversy. Both artists and critics followed with extreme eagerness her articles on Annual Exhibitions; which gave the *ACADEMY* a large and faithful foreign constituency—for Mrs. Mark Pattison, during many years of her life, was perhaps the only English art critic whose name was familiarly known in Paris, in Berlin, in Rome, and last, not least, in Vienna. In each of these places she had distinguished, and often famous, correspondents, and Sir Charles Dilke is able to give many agreeable extracts from her letters to leading foreign writers on art.

More intimate letters give unconventional—but perhaps the truer—glimpses of great English writers who were on terms of intimacy with Mrs. Mark Pattison. A doggerel rhyme by Browning does not show him in a wholly agreeable light:

"We are all reading the 'Life of Dickens' and admiring his sensitiveness at having brushed shoes and trimmed gallipots in his early days, when—did he see with the eyes of certain of his sagest friends—it was the best education imaginable for the like of him. Shall I versify?"

In Dickens, sure, philosophy was lacking,
Since of calamities he counts the crowning,
That, young, he had too much to do with Blacking:
Old, he had not enough to do with B g.

R. B."

George Eliot, as ever, rings true—her notes are simple, womanly, and tender; one winds up with the words:

"I am so-so. 'An ancient woman' . . . ready with my laughter in spite of the sorrows that never pass."

In yet another the author of "Middlemarch" observes:

"All writing seems to me worse in the state of proof than in any other form. In manuscript one's own wisdom is rather remarkable to one, but in proof it has the effect of one's private furniture repeated in the shop windows."

Lady Dilke seemed to have the power of divining remarkable people before they were known to fame, and she was one of the first to recognise the genius of Randolph Caldicott, with whom she formed a warm friendship. But wherever she went in search of health, there she made friends and admirers, and the fact that next to art she was perhaps most deeply interested in politics, both at home and abroad, naturally brought her in contact with yet another large circle of keenly intelligent people.

Many among those who knew Lady Dilke in the later years of her life—her life after her second marriage lasted nineteen years—probably think of her most closely in connection with the cause of working women, and above

all of Women's Trade Unions. In all she accomplished on their behalf she avoided both sensationalism and self-advertisement to such a degree that only those directly concerned really knew of what the late Cardinal Manning once described as "her very great work for women." In this connection it is worthy of note that Lady Dilke had a great horror of putting sex against sex; she considered that working women, even "while utterly unable to protect themselves, were desperately powerful to injure others," and she did everything in her power to make those about her realise that workers, whether men or women, must fight in the same ranks.

Sir Charles Dilke frankly avows his preference for his wife's creative work before her labours of research, and those who recognise the fine quality, not only in "The Book of the Spiritual Life," but in the short fantastic stories which won the highest praise from such entirely different critics as Walter Pater and Mr. Theodore Watts-Dunton on the one hand, and Madame Renan on the other, must feel compelled to agree with him, and to regret that Lady Dilke found so little leisure for original work. Till the publication of the present volume, two modest books, "The Shrine of Death" (1886) and "The Shrine of Love" (1891), alone provided the world with an opportunity of judging of her high imaginative gift.

Not even her work, however, remarkable as it was, and in so many spheres of art and thought, will erect in the future such a monument to Lady Dilke as that raised to her by her husband in the brief Memoir which precedes "The Book of the Spiritual Life."

QUIA MULTUM AMAVIT

On Translating Homer. By MATTHEW ARNOLD. New Edition. With Introduction and Notes by Dr. ROUSE. (Murray, 3s. 6d.)

MATTHEW ARNOLD'S celebrated Essay takes for granted a great deal about Homer which cannot be assumed; it bases its criticisms almost entirely on the Iliad to the exclusion of that "mirror of life," the Odyssey; it arrives at a conclusion which we cannot accept as to the best metre for an English verse translation. Yet, with these defects, it is an upstanding and outspoken piece of criticism, full of insight and illumination, and will always be indispensable to the translator who is ambitious of conveying to English readers any feeling of the greatness of Homer's masterpieces. It is not that Matthew Arnold was a great classical scholar. But he was something much more—one who felt and loved all that is truly great in literature. He was enamoured of the great style. *Multum amavit.*

It is in the negative, or destructive, parts of his Essay that Arnold is most convincing. He shows completely that Mr. Newman's desire to affect outlandish words in his rendering, such as "bulkin" for "a calf," and "bragly" for "finely proud," misrepresents the poet, who was not to the Periclean Athenian as Chaucer or Piers Plowman is to us, but rather as the English Bible and Book of Common Prayer. Mr. Newman's avoidance of Latin words is an unpardonable error. The English language owes its matchless power to the fact that it comes from two sources, English and Latin, not like French, Italian and Spanish, which are mainly Latin, and German, which is almost entirely Teutonic. Hence the majesty of passages in Shakespeare where several purely English words are made weighty by a couple of Latin-born polysyllables, as in

"No: this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red."

Indeed, the so-called purity of English is a subject on which has been written a great deal of what Carlyle used to call "mournful trash." On the occasion of the death of John Bright his eulogists in the House of Commons all

dwelt on what they called his Saxon English. Mr. Chamberlain quoted as an example of this quality the following sentence:

"I never imagined that you were prepared to endorse all my opinions and to sanction every political act with which I had been connected."

Now this sentence does not at all illustrate Mr. Chamberlain's point; it has in it at least seven avoidable Latin forms; but we do not think it would have been better English to write:

"I never thought that you were ready to back my mind in all things and to say y'es to all my doings with the world."

Arnold also warns the translator against conceits, like Chapman's:

"When sacred Troy shall shed her towers, for tears of overthrow"!

Fancy Hector speaking of the fallen towers as tears wept by Troy for her overthrow! He could no more have used such a phrase than Odysseus could have said:

"For all experience is an arch wherethrough
Gleams an untraveller world."

Homer, Arnold rightly reiterates, is always noble, no matter how humble his theme, because he is never affected, never "precious." "Sublimity," writes Longinus, "is the echo of nobility of spirit." "It is the perfection of style," says Aristotle, "to be clear without being mean." These two conditions are perfectly fulfilled by Homer, and satisfied his ancient critics, as they satisfy Arnold. How an Athenian of the age of Pericles would have scorned the Stevensonian "hunt after the word" and the precious saying of Flaubert: "a beautiful verse meaning nothing is superior to a less beautiful verse meaning something"!

Pope is disposed of in the words of Bentley: "a pretty poem, Mr. Pope, but you must not call it Homer." Those who with Maginn would essay the style and metre of the old Border Ballad poetry have much to say for their choice. In no other form of literature do we meet the conventional epithet and the traditionary tag so characteristic of the Greek epic. What could be more epic than such recurring phrases as

"Loud he rapped on the ring,
None so ready as fair Ellen to let the proud Earl in"?

Then, in the ballad gold is always "the red, red gold," every lady is "fair" and every knight is "gallant," "perfayte" or "gentle." The real objection to its use in so long a poem as the Iliad or Odyssey is the certainty that it would become monotonous. But Arnold shudders at the inevitable shadow of Wardour Street, the manufactured antique English, "the one continual falsetto, like the pinchbeck Roman Ballads of Lord Macaulay." This phrase has given much offence. "We all," some one has said, "have a secret *penchant* for false sentiment." The Roman Ballads will always "split the ears of the groundlings." Again, the ballad is incapable of sustained dignity. Witness Maginn's:

"And scarcely had she begun to wash
Ere she was aware of the grisly gash
Above the knee that lay."

"Never again," writes Arnold, "shall I be able to read the passage (Od. xix. 392) without having the detestable dance of Maginn's version jiggling in my ears, to spoil the effect of Homer and to torture me."

The Spenserian form is fatally incapacitated by the division into stanzas, which has nothing to correspond to it in the Greek. Of the versions which have appeared since the Essay, Arnold would probably have accepted, as the public seems to have done, the Odyssey of Mr. Way, which is now in its third edition. He would surely have condemned Mr. Mackail's rendering in the quatrains of FitzGerald's "Omar Khayyam." Only eight books have

yet appeared. In spite of the high poetic gifts of the translator, the metre is fatal even in the calm waters of the early books. What will it be when he comes to the "surge and thunder" of the narrative after the deep-counselling Odysseus has "doffed his rags"?

The metre in favour of which Arnold pronounces seems to us to be by far the worst of all. To those who know not the Greek and Latin hexameter the English hexameter is no metre at all, while it sets on edge the teeth of those in whose ears echo the strains of Homer and Theocritus, of Vergil and Juvenal. Would the "man in the street," whom we take not to be a reader of the classics, find any metre in St. Paul's excellent hexameter:

"Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them"?

His critics, however, have been unfair to Arnold's own hexameters in forcing upon them an inelastic exactitude of scansion. Would they insist on a trochaic *upon* in those exquisitely musical verses of Tennyson:

"Music that gentlier on the spirit lies
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes"?

In addition to much invaluable criticism we have in this essay delightful glimpses of the personality of the author. In inveighing against that uncouth rewriting of Greek names, which was introduced by the great Grote, he writes:

"For my part I feel no disposition to pass all my own life in the wilderness of pedantry, in order that a posterity which I shall never see may one day enter an orthographical Canaan."

A criticism like this comes to us like a healthy whiff from the end of the seventeenth century. With the same outspokenness Locke writes:

"God has not been so sparing to men that he made them barely two-legged creatures, and left it to Aristotle to make them rational."

And how characteristic is his recurring appeal to the Provost of Eton, the Master of Trinity, and Dr. Jowett! One is reminded of "those three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job."

Arnold does not seem to have observed that Newman's *long-shadowy* spear is not only grotesque but incorrect. It is grotesque because a long slight sapling could not be naturally thought of as throwing a shade. There is nothing which throws less shade. One is reminded of a sketch in *Punch* in which a cabman invites the perspiring pedestrian to come under the shadow of his whip. It is also erroneous. The κ in the penult of the Greek word ($\delta\omicron\lambda\iota\chi\acute{o}\sigma\kappa\iota\omicron\nu$) is due to the recognised linguistic principle of "dissimilation." The epithet is connected, not with $\sigma\kappa\iota\acute{\alpha}$ "shade" but, with $\delta\sigma\chi\omicron\varsigma$ "a shoot or sapling." Neither Arnold nor his editor has noticed that the passage in which the muscles of the sleeping Geraint are likened by Tennyson to pebbles in a brook is taken direct from Theocritus.

In a somewhat sad passage the essayist writes:

"I think that in England, partly from the want of an Academy, partly from a national habit of intellect to which that want of an Academy is itself due, there exists too little of what I may call a public force of correct literary opinion, possessing within certain limits a clear sense of what is right and wrong."

We may say even more. We may echo the complaint of Longinus of "the great and cosmic lack of elevation in utterance that besets our age." Not only are we making no effort to stem this $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omega\nu$ $\acute{\alpha}\phi\omicron\rho\iota\acute{\alpha}$, but we are aiding it by assailing the place of Greek in our education. Every English-speaking person is heir to a proud inheritance in being born to the language which Shakespeare spoke. Every English gentleman ought to have a chance of reading Homer in the tongue in which Homer wrote.

R. Y. TYRRELL.

CHERUBINI

Cherubini. Memorials Illustrative of his Life. By EDWARD BELLASIS. (Birmingham: Cornish, 6s. net.)

CHERUBINI is perhaps the most striking instance of a really fine composer, whose works, save for a few fragments, have practically disappeared from the theatre and concert-room. We once bought a copy of his *Medée* for a penny. His masses are, we believe, still performed in places where masses are used, but even then the great length of most of them has rendered a complete performance difficult, if not impossible. Mr. Bellasis in this very interesting book, which is an enlarged re-issue of a work originally published in 1874, has done his best to remove the neglect, into which the compositions of this almost-forgotten genius have fallen. He has gone to a great number of authorities for his material, but has not, so far as we can see, employed original research. Cherubini, however, enjoyed at one time such a reputation that the materials upon which Mr. Bellasis has been able to draw are unusually abundant. But he does not discuss what is the most interesting point of all, namely, how it is that so great a name enjoys so small a share in immortality. We feel impelled to hazard a few suggestions on the matter. In the first place the composer was not fortunate in his age. His first important efforts were interfered with by the French Revolution. Then Napoleon did not like him, though he can scarcely have failed to respect a personage who could tell him to his face that Cherubini did not write his operas to please Napoleon any more than Napoleon fought his battles to please Cherubini. Paisiello's soothing inanities were more agreeable to the Emperor than Cherubini's austerer muse, perhaps because, as some one suggested, he had to endure so much noise in his profession of arms that he liked to have a little peace when he entered a theatre. Even when Cherubini had received, as he supposed, a profitable engagement at Vienna, Napoleon followed with an army, and the unfortunate composer found himself making music before the old enemy at Schönbrunn. When the obstacle had disappeared, and the world might reasonably have expected a series of operas and other works of ever-increasing merit, Cherubini was seized with the mania which has proved fatal to the artistic reputations of lesser composers—he thought it his duty to write religious music.

It is with this side of the composer's activity that Mr. Bellasis appears to be most in sympathy. He even pays respectful attention to the Bull "Motu Proprio," and seems to regard members of the clergy, as such, as the most suitable critics of religious music. For instance, many pages are occupied by the remarks of a worthy Jesuit father on the Requiem in D minor. This Requiem is a fine, but scarcely a great work, yet the observations upon it are simply a crescendo of superlatives and therefore of no critical value. In fact we could wish that Mr. Bellasis would give us more of his own impressions concerning the music of his hero. He is usually content with quoting long patches of contemporary criticism. Now it is doubtless of value to know what great musical contemporaries, Beethoven, Haydn, Halévy, Berlioz, thought of Cherubini's music, but it is surely useless to cite the opinions of the ordinary musical critics of former days. What do we care what a man like Chorley thought about the music of Cherubini or of any one else? The important thing to know is what estimate is formed of such music by a critical mind of the present day, utilising subsequent musical achievements as a criterion. This we do not find in Mr. Bellasis' book. One curious piece of criticism, however, he does give us. He vastly approves of the various specimens of Sanctus composed by Cherubini on the ground that they are of the "proper length." This, for some occult reason, seems to be between thirty-three and ninety-seven bars. Bach ventured to compose a Sanctus of no less than three hundred and fifteen bars, but this, thinks Mr. Bellasis, was because he was a poor,

benighted Protestant composer, who did not understand the etiquette of the business. A few of Cherubini's own criticisms, which we find in the book, are far more to the point. On one occasion when the smug young Mendelssohn was presented to him by an admiring father, all he remarked was that the boy might come to something if he spent a little less on his clothes.

The musical situation was no more favourable to Cherubini's survival than was the political situation. The prevalent taste in opera was completely opposed to the solidity of his style, a style as solid in the lighter parts of *Les Deux Journées*, or *Anacréon*, as in the tremendous tragedy of *Medée*. He was not, with all respect to Mr. Bellasis, really an innovator in opera, nor original enough to compel permanent attention to his music or to found a system which should preserve his name. Beethoven undoubtedly had a great admiration for his operatic works, but we cannot think that he was much influenced by them, not even by *Faniska*, the counterpart of *Leonora*. Cherubini did not altogether admire *Leonora*, the first three performances of which he attended, and sent Beethoven a book on singing with a view to improving the latter's writing for the voice. On his younger contemporaries, however, such as Boieldieu, Halévy and Auber, his influence was great, not by the imposition of his own style but by the strengthening of theirs. That he was in advance of his time is shown by the fact that he was accused of noisiness and unmelodiousness, and this in the face of such a melody as the second subject of the overture to *Medée*. But neither his character nor his musical outlook was really progressive; his eyes were always towards the past, and such improvements as he made were not along the lines which were afterwards followed by modern music. In 1826, at the age of sixty-six, he first encountered the modern spirit, incarnated in Berlioz, and every one knows what happened when Berlioz and Cherubini met.

THE JERNINGHAM CORRESPONDENCE

A House of Letters. Being Excerpts from the Correspondence of Miss Charlotte Jerningham (the Honble. Lady Bedingfeld), Lady Jerningham, Coleridge, Lamb, Southey, Bernard and Lucy Barton, and others, with Matilda Betham; and from Diaries and various sources; and a chapter upon Landor's Quarrel with Charles Betham at Llanthony. Also Notes of some Phases in the Evolution of an English family. Edited by ERNEST BETHAM. (Jarrod, 10s. 6d. net.)

THESE letters to Matilda Betham ought, in our opinion, to have been prefaced by some account of her life and life-work, since she is known to most people only through the letters of Charles Lamb. True, some details of her are to be found in the Dictionary of National Biography, and in a little book, "Six Life-Studies of Famous Women," by Miss M. Betham-Edwards. But the former is not to be found in many households, and the latter was published about twenty-five years ago. Some condescension to the average man should have been shown by the editor; the genealogical history of the Betham family, interesting as it may be to the members of it, might well have given way to a more detailed account of one with whom five out of six readers are imperfectly acquainted.

The letters to Lady Bedingfeld form the bulk of the correspondence and possess much quiet charm and interest. Matilda Betham was the daughter of a country clergyman. Her early bent was towards art and literature, at a time when such things were considered unsuitable for women. She herself said:

"Many people have thought me naturally a singular and perhaps imprudent person because I rhymed and ventured into the world as an artist . . . but I belonged to a large family and dreaded dependence."

Her friend, Charlotte Jerningham, daughter of Lady Jerningham and afterwards wife of Sir Richard Bedingfeld, had similar tastes, at any rate as regards drawing;

and of her Sir Joshua Reynolds held the opinion that it was a pity she could not be brought up an artist. With these tastes in common it is not to be wondered at that, living near each other in an isolated country village, they should have felt drawn together and that a bond of union was formed between them which ripened into a life-long friendship, as intimate as it was interesting. The difference in their social position appears to have been no bar to its continuance.

Now and then Lady Bedingfeld, after her marriage, was disappointed with her correspondent's neglect to reply promptly, causing a somewhat ungentle reminder:

"I am glad my Philippic had effect. It was merely the scolding of disappointment. You to tell me continually of Letters written and flung away, and me not to say a word! it is just like a hungry traveller in an Inn expecting his dinner, and the landlord comes and tells him: 'Sir, I had a fine leg of mutton but it was over-roasted and I flung it in the fire. There was a Pigeon Pie but it was too much seasoned, so I gave it to the dogs; the Beef Steaks were ready dished but they were too fat so I flung them out of the window and as for the fried bacon I now bring I do not think I can let you to Eat it for I think it is cut too thick, etc. etc. etc.' Would not the traveller knock such a man down? So must I you, if you keep me starving upon apologies. I won't have it any more I tell you."

Occasionally there is a sad tone as when, after visiting her aunt's grave in the convent where she had for years served as a nun, she writes:

"I could have stood for hours musing over these simple monuments of those who were born to riches and grandeur but who preferred a life of meek retirement and now sleep in peace under the green sod surrounded by lowly peasants."

Some interesting and graphic details are given in a letter written in 1799, when there were daily expectations of an invasion of the country by Bonaparte:

"We are all in alarm about the French, the names and ages of every man, woman and child taken down as well as the number of carts, horses, etc. etc. Will the Storm only lower at a distance or are we really to see it flash in our eyes? I who have been within sight of an action and have slept undisturbed when the Shock of Artillery has made the windows rattle, do not feel any personal fears as many do but the idea of those being called out to real danger whose lives are dearer than our own makes one almost distracted. If the French land you may look in the list of the killed for my name as well as Sir R.'s" [her husband].

The letter is signed "C.B. the Desperate."

A most delightful picture is given of the effect of an unexpected visit, during a storm, of a party of ladies and gentlemen to a solitary peasants' hut in Wales occupied by a large family of women and children; but it is much too long to transcribe.

All of the letters from Coleridge and many from Southey, Charles and Mary Lamb have appeared before, in the book by Miss M. Betham-Edwards to which we have referred, but a new one from Southey contains the following account of the state of morality in 1808 amongst the lower classes in Cumberland—not we hope, representative of the whole country.

"Miss Betham, I am sorry to say that whatever may be the case in the higher ranks, the breed of good women is growing scarce in the lower ones, and of this we have lamentable proof here in Cumberland. Manufactories furnish fine clothes to the one sex and bad habits to the other; half the girls die of Consumption occasioned by cotton stockings and thin clothing; and for the other half—there is scarcely ever a marriage which is not followed by a christening within a month. It is well the white sheet has been disused for otherwise clean sheets would be wanted in Keswick. An inactive clergyman, negligent magistrates, cotton mills and Lakers have ruined the morals of the place. The remoter parts of the country have escaped that contagion and there the peasantry are what one has dreamt of so often and seldom seen, a frank, friendly, independent, happy and virtuous race."

In another part of the same letter Southey writes:

"I see you have been feeling like a Spanish Lady while these great and heartawakening transactions are going on in that noble country. Oh what a resurrection of all that is great and ennobling have we lived to see."

Mr. Betham gives no explanation of this. It refers, however, to a poem, "The Spanish Lady's Farewell," written by Matilda Betham on July 3, 1808, which is to be found amongst the fugitive poems in the "Poetical Register" for 1810.

Although it is stated in an early part of the book that a chronological arrangement of the Letters has been adopted, one or two are wrongly placed, as internal evidence shows. Southey's letter, the date of which is given as July 2, 1808, should, we fancy, be placed in 1809, as there is a reference to the publication of "Wordsworth's pamphlet" (evidently the "Convention of Cintra" which appeared on May 20, 1809). Another, in which Southey acknowledges the receipt of Geo. Dyer's "picture," is unaccountably placed amongst the correspondence of 1816, whereas a reference in another part of the same letter, omitted by Mr. Betham, to the completion of "Kehama" shows that it ought to have been included amongst the letters of 1809.

There are several from Charles Lamb which do not appear to have been printed before, and which we regret we cannot find room to quote at length. A letter from Mary Lamb is strangely out of its proper place; it is to be found before one dated February 1811, though we should be inclined to assign it to 1815 or thereabouts. There seems no doubt that it refers to "The Lay of Marie," which was published in 1816, and which Charles Lamb partly supervised when it was passing through the press.

Mention should be made of a most graphic account extracted from Matilda Betham's sister's diary of the Riots in Derby following the reception of the news of the rejection of the Reform Bill of 1831.

We notice a few misprints here and there, the most serious being "Pelage" for "Pelayo," one of the heroes in Southey's "Rhoderick," and "coild" for "child"; some inaccuracies as to facts, and one most infelicitous phrase—"his exacting optics"! In spite, however, of these and other shortcomings, which could be easily remedied in a future issue, "A House of Letters" is a book of quiet charm and we give it cordial welcome.

THE AMATEUR BIOGRAPHER

Mirabeau and the French Revolution. By CHARLES F. WARWICK
Illustrated by JOHN R. NEILL. (Lippincott, 10s. 6d. net.)

IN a few words of preface, Mr. Warwick tells us that he has written this book "in the moments stolen from the duties of an exacting profession." The reader would have guessed as much, for it has all the failings and the qualities of the writing of the enthusiastic amateur. Badly constructed, badly written, without the experience which enables a writer to marshal his facts or go forward with his narrative, it has a freshness and a sense of pleasure in the doing that make it better reading than many a work of greater value and compiled with more art and skill. *Con amore* is stamped on every page, and as a result no page is dull. Our transatlantic neighbours see things not quite from our old-world point of view, and express their thoughts with a colloquialism unknown to the British historian; thus we read that Robespierre was young,

"if so canting, so bilious a creature could ever be called young . . . an enigma, a demon of death who could mourn, could actually weep, over the loss of a pet pigeon; and yet, when the time came could keep the guillotine busy chopping off the heads of friends as well as foes. He sat in the Assembly, watching with his squinting, snake-like eyes, the king who in time was to be his victim."

This may not be the grand style, but it has almost the vigour of a caricature by Caran d'Ache. We read too that Mirabeau "had witnessed the daily constant bickerings of his parents, who fought like wild cats"; that "his wife, silly and homely, made him a cuckold," and that "he knew what his vices had cost France, and time and again he bitterly repented." It was among the consequences of these vices that he had a list of challenges "as long as his arm," and that he "had no party back of him," so that

"Robespierre and the little men came into power after the death of Mirabeau . . . sneaked out of their obscurity, and gazing round not finding aught else to do laid hands on destruction . . . the lion was dead and the jackals crept out of their caves to snarl and snap and fight over its decaying carcass."

Mr. (or is it Dr.?) Warwick is strong in might have been; he speculates on what might have happened had Mirabeau lived ten years longer, had he been well brought up, had his parents loved him, had he not had the smallpox, had he married a woman he could respect, had his life been happy, had he and Napoleon known one another. "They never met; probably never saw each other, but a meeting between them would have been most interesting to have observed and recorded." The King, the Queen, the Court, are sketched with equal fearlessness; we are even introduced to the salon of Mademoiselle Théroigne de Méricourt.

"Mirabeau, when he could escape from the jealous scrutiny of Madame Le Gay, was an occasional visitor at this house of pleasure, and it is said that Robespierre dropped in at intervals."

Would that the illustrations were as racy as the letterpress of this entertaining work! We may quarrel with the author of a monograph who does not bring his hero to the birth until we are a good third through the volume, but more would be pardoned to one who can approach the French Revolution as freshly as Christopher Columbus approached America. These little faults of construction will not occur when Mr. Warren, like Anacharsis Clootz, has "written some"; if he continue, as we hope he will, his series, Danton will surely put in an appearance before page 149, and Robespierre may be expected to drop in at intervals quite early in the volume devoted to him.

But the artist, sharing the inexperience of the author, does not share his originality or his charm; the vigorous, hardy touches that abound on the written pages are nowhere to be found in the weak and confused drawing of the illustrations. Probably Mr. Neill has not the habit of drawing for reproduction, and it may be that the cuts bear but a distant resemblance to the originals. But a bad American block implies an unsuitable original drawing, and the artist should learn from the author the value of a few bold strokes.

LONDON SIGHTS AND VISIONS

The Scenery of London. Painted by HERBERT MARSHALL. Described by G. E. MITTON. *London to the Nore.* Painted and described by W. L. and MRS. WYLLIE. (Black, 20s. net. each.)

IN her preface to "The Scenery of London" Miss Mitton tells us that the book has been made by two lovers of London for those who are or will be lovers. They attempt no "stereotyped and exhaustive survey": neither artist nor author has felt any responsibility towards the public, they say, which could lead them to touch a place before it had appealed to them. "Have you ever seen London like that?" they ask. There is no preface to "London to the Nore": had there been, we suppose that it would have been much the same. These authors and painters, therefore, do not abridge what is already known on London, but they seek to give the flower of that knowledge as it has grown in the gardens of their own minds. We might even be justified in assuming that the authors' knowledge is as limited as that of many other Londoners, and that they rely upon the richness of their impressions, the accuracy of their memory and their skill in finding the inevitable phrase in description. The tasks of the artists are different. For while their medium is a more difficult one to master in such a way as to give moderate pleasure to ordinary minds, this possible disadvantage is compensated by the greater suggestiveness of colour; by the fact that a prejudice can be more easily overcome by a strong personal view than it can be through the medium of words, which every one is believed to have some talent for using; and the fact that mere fidelity and a thoughtful use of paint, when applied to subjects that are already invested by an historic and atmospheric and sentimental glamour, may come to be almost as potent as the subjects themselves.

It is the tradition of this series to dissociate the author from the painter, to mingle their work with no precise aim,

and to exclude any possibility that the two have approached their subjects with similar advantages and prejudices of education, temperament or experience. Probably, if the text and pictures occupied distinct portions of the book, their effect would be more perfect. We, therefore, treat them separately without apology.

Mr. Herbert Marshall contributes seventy-five pictures to "The Scenery of London." These are so various that, almost without looking at them, we should have expected them not to represent any decided point of view, nor any strongly developed preferences and methods: and they do not. Thus, the pictures of Queen Victoria's funeral procession, of Cannon Street on a summer evening, of the Pavilion at Lord's and of Trafalgar Square, seem to be the work of a skilled and laborious artist who has not been able to choose between a fearless impressionism and an inquisitive fidelity. After the first pleasure of finding these coloured pictures in an octavo book, we are interested chiefly in the psychology of the troubled artist himself. In the pictures of St. Paul's and Ludgate Hill, and of Pont Street, Chelsea, for example, the fidelity conquers, and attracts us by its earnestness rather than by its effect, which is indefinite. In "Low Tide at Southwark," "The South Foreshore of the Pool from the Tower Bridge," "Sunrise at Lambeth," "Westminster Towers," and "Limehouse Reach," the artist escapes from the crowded human figures which he respects but cannot make more than respectable, and submits to a vision, with most pleasing results. Fidelity and a vision almost combine in "The Approach to Westminster," "Millbank, Westminster," and "Old Essex Wharf," are charming, and intimately the artist's own. "An Arch of London Bridge," with the Tower Bridge in the distance, again, is a fine attempt to see things as in themselves they really are (or as Arnold thought they might be), which is impossible. And so, as illustrations to a book, to be looked at closely and not over long, Mr. Marshall's pictures are excellent, because they come from a fine artist, and yet present a variety of moods and likings which are entirely suited to such books as these. As to the colour reproduction, it is good enough to be admired, but not so good as to allow us to forget its merit.

In Mr. Wyllie's pictures in "London to the Nore," we are struck chiefly by the wholesome sentiment and the microscopic eye. His "Limehouse, a bit of Vanishing London," we much admire; but if we exclude the excitement of the exaggerated colour, what is most remarkable in it is the fact that the artist shows us not so much what he has seen as what is there to be seen. When he attempts a quite different subject—like the Thames in moonlight by Tower Bridge or the Upper Pool at sunset—we admire his condescension to something august, his clever approach to a true vision. "London from the Tower Bridge," on the other hand, is really a gift to Mr. Wyllie from a spirit that does not often visit the yachtsman's mind. "The Customs House and Billingsgate" is an epic piece by one with a cheerful lyrical faculty. Where he excels and seems to be most personal is in the many pictures that reveal a sailor's blithe and almost unconscious enjoyment of big things. The little red sails and the painted bows in these look charmingly bold, seated on the many waters. Here, in his pictures, undoubtedly, is the Thames as it appears to thousands every year.

Mrs. Wyllie's text is a too frivolous accompaniment. She sees just what any one would see and describes it just as any one could. She gives us the impression of one delighted and only a little frightened at writing a book. Now and then she is bewildered—she wonders "what is the purpose of" the *Morning Post* Embankment Home, and does not discover—but as a rule she goes carelessly and gaily on, with gossip, scraps of history and, as far as we can see, unnecessary remarks about the jolly times she has had on the Thames. The result is that we see the great river's edge crowded with famous buildings and men at their windows, all watching a happy family travelling in a boat from Westminster to

Allington on the Medway. She has no point of view, and what she puts down she puts down because it occurs to her and not because she has a place for it. She might have written ten times as much and have remained ineffectual.

Miss Mitton is a hard worker who has read and seen many things. She writes carefully. She knows the necessity and value of selection and arrangement. She knows that intentions do not always produce answering effects. But her admirable observation and reading and intentions have been enfeebled by her unwillingness to trust her own impressions, or if not unwillingness to trust them, then an inability to set them down. More than once, she tries to give a picture of a street—Bow Street, for example—on an ordinary day. She wants a dull picture, and forgets that dullness cannot produce it. She simply makes a thoughtful inventory which is not an impression, and cannot give an impression. The reader knows that what she says is perfectly true, but nothing more. In another place, she tries to suggest that Trafalgar Square and Whitehall are the product of many ages, by supposing an American to use a time-machine in the neighbourhood. But, frankly, we receive no impression of age or the pageant of time from a puppet show of men and women in extraordinary clothes. She might as wisely describe flowers by telling us on what soil their roots are fed. She has, too, a belief that it is possible to describe things as in themselves they really are, and forgets that a big book could be written about Westminster Bridge in her patient and modest manner without giving a true or credible notion of it. But she has aimed high and done some interesting and some pleasing work, and made a readable book out of "The Colour of London," the city, great buildings, associations, great men, the river, commonplace scenes, and so on.

THE PLOT OF "EDWIN DROOD"

It is a pity that Dickens tried so often to write stories with secrets and elaborate plots. The task was not the task to which he was born, and his whole system of nods and winks and "blinds" and false clues is fatiguing. For one, I do not care whether Edwin Drood was killed, or whether Jasper somehow killed somebody else by mistake, and was "hunted down" by Edwin Drood in disguise. Mr. J. Cuming Walters' detective work on the story, "Clues to Dickens' Mystery of Edwin Drood" (Chapman and Hall, 2s. 6d. net), is, none the less, a pleasant piece of argument. He begins by saying that Dickens thought the secret of his plot "entirely novel, original, and baffling." But, if the secret has not baffled Mr. Walters, it is a pretty open and inexpensive secret in itself, though Mr. Walters has all the merit of a novel and probable suggestion.

We all admit that Jasper had either strangled Edwin with a black silk scarf, and committed his body to a heap of quick-lime that lay about convenient, or that he thought he had done so. We all see that the crime is to be proved by a gold ring of rubies and diamonds, which Edwin has concealed about his person, though Jasper does not know it. Mr. Proctor thought that Edwin was not dead at all, but was watching round the corner, in Dickens' wonted way, though with no obvious motive, disguised as Datchery, a man with a white wig, black eyebrows, and apparently, of middle age. All this is very Dickensian, and so obvious that Dickens could not have deemed the idea either original or baffling, unless he had some explanation as to how Jasper killed the wrong man, and as to how the wrong man came to be possessed of Edwin's tell-tale ruby and diamond ring. Certainly, if Dickens had found a way of explaining all that, his plot was, so far, baffling.

Mr. Walters concludes that Edwin was killed, and shoved into a heap of quick-lime, and that the prowling

Datchery was Helena Landless, sister of Neville Landless, on whom Jasper attempts to throw the burden of the crime. Helena, we know, had often run away from her cruel step-father in the disguise of a boy. She was very resolute; she had to clear her brother's character. She had black eyebrows, like Datchery, and wore, as Datchery, a white wig over her own head of hair: hence her habit of not wearing her tall hat, which was uncomfortably warm. She could run up to town, dress in the costume of her sex, and meet Rosa Bud; and run down again to Cloisterham and spy, disguised as Datchery. She scored up a kind of diary in chalk lines, lest her female hand should betray her. But she would not keep a secret diary in chalk on the back of a door, in writing; nor is there any reason why she kept a diary at all, whether in Ogam, or in any other linear script; or why, if a diary she needed, she did not write it in Tamil (she hailed from Ceylon), and lock it up in her despatch-box. Granting that a very young girl could disguise herself, her voice, her hands, her feet, in the semblance and costume of a middle-aged "buffer, living idly on his means," then Helena may be Datchery. But suppose she is, the idea of Dickens is improbable with the worst sort of improbability, is terribly far-fetched, and fails to interest. It is the idea of a bad sixpenny novel. We are asked to credit Dickens with "the highest scientific skill," and this egregious invention is the result of his science! The idea would have been rejected by Mr. Guy Boothby, but it does not follow that Mr. Walters has not hit on Dickens' idea. If he has, "Edwin Drood" is far below "Count Robert of Paris" in its first uncorrected state, as the public will never know it.

Jasper, when he met Helena disguised as Datchery, would have known her voice; she had spoken out to a whole company of whom Jasper was one. Mr. Walters writes: "it is of the utmost significance that" (when Helena and Jasper met) "Dickens does not represent them as exchanging one single word." Helena, in fact, had thrice spoken to Jasper, among others, in her "low rich voice," on an occasion which Jasper could never forget, and Jasper had thanked her for what she said. A professional singer, like Jasper, would certainly recognise the low rich voice of Helena in the lips of Datchery: the voice in which Helena had told him that she "would not fear him in any circumstances" ("Edwin Drood." First Edition, page 44). Yet, on Mr. Walters' theory, Jasper is not to recognise a voice that had spoken, in his hearing, words of significance remarkable to him. In short, if Datchery is Helena, the plot is about as lame and improbable a plot as can be imagined.

Mr. Walters is certainly wrong, I think, in his inferences from the drawings, by Dickens' son-in-law, on the cover of "Edwin Drood." These illustrations always gave an inkling of the story. On the observer's right, a wild figure of a man is running up a spiral staircase, pointing forward with one hand. Below, two men are ascending the staircase. Both are meant for gentlemen. They cannot, therefore, be Durdles, the dirty vagabond, and Jasper ascending the cathedral tower, as Mr. Walters thinks. Again, the running figure is Jasper, if Mr. Walters rightly identifies Jasper with the man who kneels and kisses a girl in a garden seat, in another design on the cover. But Jasper does nothing of the sort in any part of the story, and Jasper has whiskers like blacking-brushes, and this kneeling man has none. The three figures, one running up a stair, the others following him as he points upwards, are Neville, Grewgious, and Canon Crisparkle in a "Bible Reader's" hat. They are in full daylight, not in the dark with a lantern, like Jasper and Durdles when they climb the tower on the very "unaccountable expedition." Probably they are cheyving the villain, Jasper, and Crisparkle is kept in athletic training that he may overpower the said Jasper. The girl whose hand Neville kisses as she sits in the garden-chair is Rosa. None of these adventures is in the published part of the story.

The illustration at the bottom of the cover shows a dark

man, in dark clothes; he has dark whiskers; he is opening the door of a dark room; holding up a lantern, and revealing the figure of a tall fair young man, in a Tyrolean hat and a long loose great-coat, *not* "a tightish surtout," such as Datchery wore, and as no woman with a figure could wear without betraying her sex. The young man is more like Edwin Drood than any one else in Mr. Fildes' illustrations, while, if the dark man is Jasper, as Mr. Walters thinks, then the man kissing the girl's hand, and running wildly upstairs is *not* Jasper, as Mr. Walters holds. [He certainly is not, I repeat, for he has no whiskers, and Jasper had dense black whiskers. Then the man revealed in the light of the lantern cannot be Helena, "the Avenger," waiting in the crypt. The man is fair, and has not a white wig, like Helena when disguised as Datchery; nor is he middle-aged, nor is he Helena in female costume, nor is there any reason why Helena should have two different male costumes, one to wear as Datchery, another to wear as "Avenger."

Moreover, if Drood's body was consumed in quicklime, how did Jasper put it into the crypt, quicklime and all? If not, why did Jasper go into a crypt to be sure that there was no remaining evidence against him? Let it be granted that Jasper did put a sufficiency of lime into the crypt, or tomb, or whatever it is, in company with Edwin's body, then people would still ask: "Who shovelled away the quicklime and put it into the tomb, crypt, or vault?" Mr. Walters thinks that Neville was with Helena-Datchery, in the place where the light of the lantern falls on a tall fair young man in a loose light greatcoat, and that Jasper dirked Neville there and then. I reckon it more probable that Jasper polished off Neville on the top of the Cathedral tower, and was then mastered by the athletic Crisparkle. But, on either hypothesis,—and granting to Mr. Walters that the old woman who keeps the den for opium-smokers is Jasper's mother and Edwin Drood's aunt—what a plot have we here, what a farrago of unnatural nonsense!

ANDREW LANG.

IN A COPY OF "IONICA"

William Cory, died June 11, 1892

HERE, in these verses of a scholar's ease,
We may win sunshine from St. Martin's summer,
And with deep honour hail the latest comer
From that lost garden of the Hesperides.

Beauty and grace strewed flowers on the way;
Beauty and boyhood garlanded with sorrow,
These were the dreams of him who feared to-morrow
Because it might not bring back yesterday.

The sunset memories for which he prayed
Have brought their after-glow; no frost can harden
The soil which he has tended; in his garden
The three white lilies grow and will not fade.

Let others do what he could only sing.
He hailed the younger heroes newly risen,
As sings the blithe canary in its prison,
Because it knows that somewhere it is Spring.

So may our opening eyes shine year by year
"In deeper dream with wider range" hereafter;
And when we catch "the ring of boyish laughter"
May we remember him. "He is not here."

C. R. S.

THE EARLIEST FICTION WITH A PURPOSE

THE GESTA ROMANORUM

PREACHERS in the Middle Ages believed as fervently as the American after-dinner orator of to-day in the sovereign efficacy of the anecdote seductively told, no matter whether it were perfectly apposite to the matter in hand, or dragged in shamelessly by the heels. There were in those days writers of manuals for pulpit orators, works which went by the name of dictionaries of moral philosophy, doctrinal encyclopædias, and the like, and consisted chiefly of entertaining stories, each accompanied by the dry bones of an ethical application, which it was the business of the preacher to clothe with flesh and adapt to the peculiar needs of his hearers. Such were the "Speculum Doctrinale" of Vincent of Beauvais, compiled in the twelfth century from Phædrus and other fabulists; the collection made by Odo de Cerinton, an English Cistercian; Robert Holkot's "Moralitates," a series of forty-seven stories, dated 1349; the "Sermones Dominicales" (1431) of John Felton, Vicar of Magdalen College, Oxford; and the portly tomes of Petrus Berchorius, or Pierre Bercheur, whose "Reductorium super totam Bibiam," "Repertorium Morale," and "Dictionarium Morale," bear so strong a resemblance to the famous collection called, perplexingly, the "Gesta Romanorum," that he has by many scholars been credited with the composition of that work. The "Reductorium" is said to have comprised all the stories in the Bible reduced to the form of allegories; and the purpose of the other *thesauri* was to furnish an illustrative story on any ethical or doctrinal topic whatever. Outside the sphere of divinity, but begotten of the same passion for dramatic moralisation, were such repositories of tale and anecdote as the well-known Book of the Knight of the Tower.

The fact is, most of the mediæval story-books owed their existence to this practical purpose, the idea of which came originally from the east. It was the Oriental mind that brought forth the fable, and in all probability invented allegory. The West borrowed the form, and contrived to turn to account in similar fashion its own stores of legend. No tale was so stubborn, or so intrinsically immoral, that the expert casuist could not deduce therefrom some edifying lesson in conduct or doctrine. History, that most refractory material of all, afforded him the choicest themes for moral discourse, for he lived in a blissful age of ignorance when, if he spoke of Domitian as a mild and enlightened Christian ruler (see "Gesta Romanorum"), or of the Antonines as brutal tyrants, no one among his hearers was likely to correct him. Fact and fiction were not yet clearly differentiated; both were inextricably commingled in the popular mind as legend, offering the most plastic of materials for the purposes of the divine. In its palmy days the "Gesta Romanorum" was presented and received as authentic history, although it contains some of the most startling deviations from fact and sheer caricatures of probability on record. This book was as widely read as ever were the "Arabian Nights" and the "Morte Darthur." Before the invention of printing it was copied so often and, such is the weakness of the scribe, so many divergences were introduced, that few among the surviving manuscripts have more than a family likeness to each other, and some are so unlike that learned editors have taken them for quite different works, compiled in imitation of the "Gesta." The number of the manuscripts illustrates the enormous popularity of this treasury of entertainment and moral edification, from the end of the thirteenth century to the Tudor period: the printed editions show that it was still read up to the eighteenth century. Boccaccio and Chaucer quarried in it for material; that Shakespeare followed their example is known to every one; perhaps not so many are aware that Schiller and Dante Gabriel Rossetti extracted ore from the same rich mine.

Like Bercheur's "Reductorium," the "Gesta Romanorum" was compiled in the first place as a preacher's handbook, though in later days it was read simply for the sake of the entertainment it provided. Probably the nucleus was a series of stories from the minor classical writers and from Latin chroniclers, the title, "Gests of the Romans," being attached with some show of propriety. Soon Eastern apologues came in, with fairy-tales, beast fables, and all the corrupt versions of old stories, and the popular legends that could be forced by any dexterous feat of manipulation to point an acceptable moral. The moralist had, in truth, a hard task very often. Yet it is seldom that he gives up the attempt in despair, and instead of drawing a fruitful analogy with the actual life of his hearers, tells them in general terms: "My beloved, the king is Christ; and the son is any bad Christian."

The peculiar characteristic of these interpretations is the exactness of their symbolism and the scholastic subtlety of their casuistry. Every moralisation that we quote will illustrate this. One consequence of this subtlety is that a good story, with a sound moral implied, is often spoiled by having forced upon it an application at variance with its natural trend. A soldier is tried for some criminal offence (in chapter 58, Swan's translation) and outwits his judge by certain cunning replies. In the application we are told:

"The soldier is any sinner; the judge is a wise confessor. If the sinner confesses the truth in such a manner as not even demons can object, he shall be saved."

In other words craft and subtlety are commended as a means to attain the divine forgiveness. In the new version of the story of Atalanta's race, the hero who wins the maiden by the device of throwing down the golden balls, is represented as the devil, "who provides various seductions to draw us from the goal of heaven." A most curious example of this sort of adaptation is a long story founded on the tragic legend of Œdipus. This is turned into an elaborate allegory, in which the child of the ill-fated pair is made to typify the whole human race, which is eventually saved by the power of a certain talisman, to wit, the Ten Commandments. We get the most extraordinary distortions of familiar classical legends. There is, for instance, the story of the chasm that opened in the midst of the Roman forum, and could be closed only by means of the self-immolation of a citizen. Marcus Aurelius (*sic*) volunteers to cast himself into the pit, on condition that he be allowed to indulge himself in every wish of his heart for one year. The incongruousness of this bargain does not seem to have struck the simple-minded moralist, who naïvely observes:

"My beloved, Rome is the world, in the centre of which, before the nativity of Christ, was the gulf of hell, yawning for our immortal souls. Christ plunged into it, and by so doing ransomed the whole human race."

After this daring application of heathen legend to sacred things, there is not much to shock us in the new story of the Cretan labyrinth, where instead of Ariadne we have the Lady of Comfort, and instead of the Minotaur an ordinary lion. The Lady of Comfort is the Kingdom of Heaven. The garden (*i.e.*, the labyrinth) is the world; the lion the devil. The ball of thread (which corresponds to the clue given to Theseus by Ariadne) represents baptism, by which we enter into the world. Another travesty of classical story would be blasphemous were it not naïve and grotesque. Let the application suffice.

"My beloved, by Pompey understand the Creator of all things; Caesar signifies Adam, who was the first man. His daughter is the soul, betrothed to God. Adam was placed in Paradise to cultivate and guard it; but not liking the condition imposed upon him, like Caesar he was expelled his native country. The Rubicon is baptism, by which mankind re-enters a state of blessedness."

Somewhat suspicious morals are inculcated by the following:

A certain king had three daughters, whose husbands died in the space of one year. He desires them to marry again: but they prefer to honour the memory of their first husbands by remaining single. This admirable motive

is unpleasantly stultified by the moral, which explains that:

"The three daughters are the soul, which image the Holy Trinity. . . . The three Dukes (their husbands) are the devil, the world, and the flesh; when they die, that is, when the soul repents of her sins, do not again be united to them."

Then there is the king with two marriageable daughters, Rosamunda, whose dowry is her incomparable beauty, and Gratiaplana, who is ugly, but will inherit the kingdom. Contrary to the postulates of modern romance, there is a rush of suitors for the dowerless girl, whilst poor Gratiaplana receives never an offer until:

"at last, a certain poor nobleman, very wisely reflecting that though the girl was abominably ugly, yet she was rich, determined to marry her. He therefore went to the king, and solicited his consent; who, glad enough at the proposal, cheerfully bestowed her upon him, and after his decease bequeathed him the kingdom."

Instead of rebuking the mercenary character of the fortune-hunter, the moralist commends him, and concludes, with unction: "But the poor in spirit will receive the kingdom of heaven." Tale 121, taken literally, actually condones adultery, when the excuse is incongruity of age.

Divine justice itself is, unconsciously, travestied in the story of a king who was an inflexible judge.

"It happened that one knight accused another of murder, in this form—'That knight went out, in company with another, to war; but no battle was fought. He, however, returned without his companion; and therefore we believe he murdered him.'"

The king appeared satisfied with the inference, and commanded the prisoner to be executed. But as they approached the place of execution, they beheld the first knight advancing towards them, alive and well. The judge, enraged at this interruption of the sentence, said to the accused: "I order you to be put to death, because you are already condemned." Then turning to the accuser, "And you also, because you are the cause of his death." "And you too," addressing the restored knight, "because you were sent to kill the first, and you did not." The applications explains that this capricious king and judge is God: the first two knights are body and soul; the third is any prelate.

Many of the tales seem to have a grudge against those great princes of the church. There is, for instance, the tale of the pirate who said to Alexander:

"Because I am master only of a single galley, I am termed a robber, but you, who oppress the world with huge squadrons, are called a king and a conqueror."

The pirate, who eventually becomes rich and a dispenser of justice, is stated in the moralisation to be a sinner in the world, whilst Alexander is any prelate. This is rather hard on the prelates, but perhaps the fabulist did not see all the bearings of his application. Many of the stories show a very defective sense of humour. Even the attempts of the monkish moralist to do honour to his own class are not a success. It is a grotesque compliment in Tale 79, to liken zealous preachers to a number of little barking dogs, for whom a certain king had great partiality. The real object is, of course, to cast obloquy on some one else. One day, an ass, envying the favouritism shown to the dogs, entered the hall, and running up to the king, raised his clumsy feet with difficulty round the royal neck. The servants, not understanding the ass's courteous intention, pulled him away, and belaboured him soundly. This misguided creature, we are told, represents any one who, without the necessary qualifications, presumes to take upon himself the interpretation of the scriptures. Such impostors are a very common object of satire and invective, and many stories that puzzle one by the seeming absence of any sound moral, can be interpreted as a rebuke to this special bugbear of the regular practitioner. On the whole, it must be said that what is euphemistically known as "worldly wisdom" takes a much more honourable place in the ethics of the "Gesta Romanorum" than does any loftier or more altruistic theory of conduct.

A LITERARY CAUSERIE

BLAISE PASCAL

"The Provincial Letters, masterpieces undoubtedly of reasoning, wit and eloquence, were pronounced to be superior to all the writings of Plato, Cicero, and Lucian together, particularly in the art of dialogue, an art in which, as it happens, Plato far excelled all men, and in which Pascal, great and admirable in other respects, is notoriously very deficient."

I HAVE begun this chat about Pascal with a quotation from Macaulay upon the question of his genius, not so much because I agree with Macaulay's words, which are too rhetorical for so refined a character as that of Pascal, but because the English writer sums up in his rhetorical fashion (which he has made almost a national institution), the rough edges of the extraordinary and wonderful man who practically conquered that which is known—and I use the phrase without any sort of feeling of hostility—as Jesuitry in Europe. Macaulay, of course, was most violently opposed, not so much to the Jesuits themselves as to the idea which had grown up, slowly but surely, in the early days of the nineteenth century, as a tradition which had to be emphasised. That tradition was splendidly emphasised by Macaulay's summary of Pascal's attitude towards the workings of religious poetry; but I fear much that all the subtleties of that remarkable character were not in his mind when he gave to the world his opinion of the great Frenchman's own attitude towards religion and scientific thought.

Pascal remains for ever a modern man. His thought is new, his ways belong to the present day, his independence is everlastingly assured, his amazing subtlety of mind will linger among all the subtle meanings of the world. I like to begin by thinking of Pascal as a great mathematician. It may be something of a heresy; but the mathematician seems to me always to start with a great advantage in life; the man, for example, who is as interested in the Differential Calculus as he is in the growing of the young leaves of Spring, must certainly have a more curious, a more inquisitive, a more inquiring mind than the man who rejects what one may summarise as the Equation to an Ellipse, the Return of the Hyperbola from infinite space, and the Law which draws the very seas of the world towards its satellite, the Moon. It was in such great matters as these that Pascal's mind constantly dwelt; and therefore it was in the truth of things that he took his pleasure. For, if one constantly considers natural laws, one necessarily must make of truth the flag wherewith to advance through life. Pascal once wrote:

"Nothing can be more astonishing in the nature of man than the contraries which we there observe, with regard to all things. He is made for the knowledge of truth; this is what he most ardently desires and most eagerly pursues; yet when he endeavours to lay hold upon it, he is so dazzled and confounded as never to be secure of actual possession. Hence the two sects, of which the one would utterly deprive men of all truth, while the other would infallibly ensure their inquiries after it; but each with reasons so improbable, as only to increase our confusion and perplexity, while we are guided by no other lights than those which we find in our own hearts."

There, surely, spoke the great man, who was not to be found in any condition of obscurity aroused by all the clouds that darken the sun of truth, but was one who desired nothing greater than this, that we should lift our eyes away from the indignity of lying, that we should turn adrift from the falsehood of pretence, that we should see with our own eyes, judge with our own minds, know our own limitations, comprehend our own faults, and throw away all the veils wherewith—to speak as in a parable—Mohammed surrounded Allah. Mohammed and Pascal met across the centuries in this matter. The great founder of the Turkish religion saw as in a vision the First Cause, surrounded by mantles; one by one had they to be removed before the actual face of the Divinity was seen. That was Pascal's idea; it was this ideal for which he lived, and heart-broken at failing to accomplish in

his own lifetime that which he desired, he died. Poet, eclectic, mystic, monastic, outspoken, courageous, intellectual, martyr, these are some of the terms that can be applied to the hero of Port Royal. Among that great army of pioneers with whom the name of Giordano Bruno is so splendidly associated, Pascal leads humanity with the banner of progress, and teaches the world how to be thoughtful in its endeavour to reach the heights for which mankind was surely created. There are many who would call him a heretic, many who would reject his teaching from the religious point of view; but surely there is none who would not bow to the great scientific man, who, in the rejection of everything that was superfluous, was able to discover facts and truths which associate him for all time with the names of such great men as Kepler, Newton, Empedocles, Aristotle, and all those who have worked—literally have worked out their lives—in order that the human brain should be expanded and that we should know that which we are destined to know, even though the great darkness still curtains our desire.

At the moment of writing, there lies before me the third edition of Isaac Newton's "*Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica*," a book in the composition of which the greatest mathematician of all times was largely indebted to Blaise Pascal; it may never be known, but one may still have a shrewd suspicion that Pascal's influence also worked upon the brain of Newton in those later and tragic days when he made his most futile attempt to interpret the "*Book of Revelations*," in that outrageous manner which, had it not been for the great and glorious, the work which he had before accomplished, would have placed him among the most impossible mystics of the eighteenth century. Without the genius of a Pascal, however, it would not be easy to realise how Newton arrived at the great idea that the laws of gravitation could only be proved by playing with the movements of planets. Pascal himself in a very notable passage has spoken of what he charmingly called interstellar relations. Surely, here was the germ of the thought of gravity; and one may well imagine that in the short and busy brain-work of his lifetime, this great genius might possibly have turned his attention to the idea of that mysterious relation which exists between all material bodies, but at the same time may not have attended so far to it as to note how serious and how important a matter it might become to human knowledge. In such a spirit, one can easily imagine why the Chinese, for example, discovered the compass and made a plaything of it, that in their wise books all the laws of nature were explained, and yet, as we all know, that they used gunpowder for nothing more than fireworks; it was possibly the want of the application of great theory to great practice which disappointed Pascal in his mathematical and theoretical discoveries, and which turned him, in an ecstasy of ambition, to argue religion with the strongest and most influential religious society of his time, and which also made him say those historic words: "This day I have destroyed an evil of the world." Of course he had done nothing of the sort; the great society which he opposed continued its work, despite its defeat at Port Royal; a single man against so many intellectual, profoundly taught and versatile men, men who have been probably more attacked and more wantonly abused than any other society of modern times, not even excepting Freemasons, could not succeed in the end; yet there is, we are assured, not a single man among his opponents, not one Jesuit, who does not regard with admiration and with respect and reverence, the genius of one who sought not to overthrow separate individuals, but attempted to destroy a combination of personalities which he thought was making for the ill of the world.

Among the celebrated men of history whose great faults have been surpassed by national and patriotic virtues, Pascal takes no place. He was simply and uniquely great. Not to him, so far as any historical record goes, has ever

been attributed any of those vices, any of those weaknesses, any of those defects which have often marred the reputation and memory of great and influential world-workers. His record is stainless: his genius was probably unsurpassable; his thoughtfulness, his keenness, his sense of logic, his reasoning power, place him among that great army of thinkers, ascetics, even, one may say, saints, who have devoted their lives to raising the ideals of humanity, and who have given all their work to benefit those who walk in darkness. Of old it was said that people who walked in darkness "had seen a great light," and such a light was revealed during the lifetime and through the life-work of Blaise Pascal. Even though it may be that a certain religious emotion and a certain religious persuasion may possibly turn the heart away from the achievement of the man, there cannot be one human creature who understands and knows his life-story but endeavours to find a feeling of tolerance for one who was very convinced of his own views, but who possibly may have in the expression of those views distressed and hurt the feelings of his many opponents. But I will venture to say that among all the array of great men who have worked out their lives in order to express their own opinions, who have given up friendship, who have even surrendered love, who have cast aside all the pleasures which this world might have brought them, there is scarcely one, even though I remember such names as Confucius, Francis of Assisi, Ignatius Loyola, Cranmer, Jeremy Taylor or Stanislas Kostka, who has done so much, who has thought so much, who has meant so much for humanity as this wonderful, this attenuated spirit, which informed the mind of Pascal. He probably never entertained a single thought that was evil, and he certainly reached those high levels towards which the hands of human beings are eternally outstretched, but unto which so few are able to reach. Pascal will ever remain, then, among the chosen whose humanity should delight all living beings, and to whom humanity owes a very great and a very serious debt of gratitude.

VERNON BLACKBURN.

FICTION

A Jay of Italy. By BERNARD CAPES. (Methuen, 6s.)

IN this novel Mr. Bernard Capes is quite at his best. His sentences are still crisped and curled and tied up with ribbons; his people still show a tendency to talk blank verse; he is still terribly self-conscious all the time. But he has left the sheer brutalities which he used to love to dress up in ribbons and laces of style. He has an idea, a fertile one, and a pretty one. He is telling of an inspired boy, a little, dainty, rather exquisite Italian, who has a mission. Heaven has sent him, he believes, to call the Court of Galeazzo Sforza of Milan, not to repentance in dust and ashes, but to regeneration by universal love and purity. The gospel he preaches is really the gospel of art carried into life; the achievement of beauty, physical and spiritual, and of happiness and virtue through clean living, restraint, fresh air, and the simple joys of nature and innocence. He is no puritan, rather an artist, to whom grossness and, above all, cruelty of any kind are abominable, as defacing the fairest work of God. Over the picture of this little Bernardino Mr. Capes has used the very best of his great talent. The boy is charming, never priggish, never sickly; a sweet and natural youth for all his amazing mission and the courage with which he carries it out. His end was by starvation in the deepest of Galeazzo's dungeons; partly because the Court soon tired of living a Watteau-Arcadian existence, and partly because the women of it were too deeply tainted with licence to bear his teaching. One of them, the Countess of Casa Caprona, had tried to seduce the boy, as soon as ever she met him on the road to Milan; Duchess Bona loves him too, and the jealousy of the

Countess leads to Bernardino's downfall. Yet the story is not melodramatic. There is truth in it, and fancy; and a certain gorgeousness, even a sense of strain, is not out of place with such a subject and such a period. The pictures of the Court, Duke Galeazzo, Cicada, the fool, and Carlo Lanti, Bernardino's bluff and blundering champion, are masterly drawn.

The Purple Head. By EDWIN PUGH. (Hurst & Blackett, 6s.)

If this book were bound in paper instead of cloth, if the cover were decorated with an illustration of the most gruesome incident in the story which it contains, and if the price were sixpence instead of six shillings, it would take its place, as of course, among the so-called "shockers," against which hard things are daily said in the police courts. For, apart from its outward appearance and its price, it has all the qualities which we associate with that class of literature. Even among its own kind we doubt whether it would rank very high; there are, it is true, two murders (one of them especially revolting), a real Adelphi villain, and a detective of the peculiar pattern approved in melodrama, but there is the grave defect from the point of view of the "shocker"-reader that neither heroine nor hero ever comes seriously under suspicion of guilt. "Mrs. Cyphas," we admit, is a new character to us, and we give Mr. Pugh all credit for his creation, which suggests that he is capable of writing a better novel than this. But if there is anything else praiseworthy in "The Purple Head," it is lost in a cloud of otiose adjectives and fantastic metaphors. For example: "Side by side with the weed of hate that flourished in his seared heart burgeoned a poisonous purple flower of passionate desire for the sweet First Cause of his discomfiture." The book is full of this sort of writing and of unusual words such as "bosage," "susurrus" and others: excellent words in their proper place but ridiculous in a book of this stamp. The best recommendation that we can give to it is to say that, if it were republished in a sixpenny edition with half the adjectives omitted, it would be a tolerable companion, failing a better, on a dull railway journey.

This Our Sister. By MRS. HAROLD GORST. (Long, 6s.)

ALTHOUGH this story bears no sign that it was written with an appealing purpose, almost every chapter conveys a lesson to thoughtful readers. It is a tale of want, wrong and misery, well told, but with a singular absence of feeling, cold as a police report, and less reticent. Nell's history from the day on which her father murdered her mother is unrelieved tragedy. The baby brother left to her care dies of starvation in spite of her extremity of self-sacrifice. She is homeless and friendless except for the comradeship of a girl as destitute as herself, and after enduring terrible hardships she becomes an artist's model. This artist has chosen his profession chiefly as a cloak for his vices. There follows for Nell a few brief days of happiness, and then a plunge into the river. Not many women could or would have written the book; still, if Mrs. Gorst is proud of it, she has some reasons for satisfaction. She knows her materials, and how to use them; no ugly situation daunts her; she has a quick eye for effective points; the strong expressive word is there, and her unsoftened pictures of sordid poverty are convincing. The details—and the book is crowded with details—are evidently most carefully studied; the story runs on steadily, skilfully, and as free from sentiment as fate itself. We are roused to horror, indignation, or pity by the circumstances of the story; the people touch us not at all. What they say or do interests us, not why they say or do it. A wide experience and a well stocked note-book have supplied the author with "telling bits" from life in the slums; horrible incidents (some readers will never get beyond page 26), strange happenings in courts and alleys, examples of cockney humour, scenes of domestic brutality. In many parts of the book there is the sort of fascination that we cannot resist though we are ashamed of it; while there are few

pages the mind can recall with pleasure. Though "This Our Sister" is out of the common run, it will not be a welcome addition to everybody's bookshelves.

Hecla Sandwith. By EDWARD U. VALENTINE. (Harper, 6s.)

THIS novel is written in the American language. The author talks of an "inebriating voice," of a courtship being "generally acceded." His spelling is American, of course, and he often says things in the fresh American way. "Nature had presented her with a tear-bottle for a heart, and she had removed the stopper," he tells you of a lady who cries in and out of season. But the interest and value of the book do not depend on a few pithy sayings. It presents a leisurely and very charming picture of a Quaker settlement in Pennsylvania in 1856: a settlement of prosperous ironfounders and their workpeople. The great Hecla furnace that has brought fortune to the Sandwiths glows in the background of this, their family history; and we are as much concerned for its continued success as for the happy ending of Hecla Sandwith's love-story. Both Hecla and her step-sister Harmony are drawn with delicate precision, and leave that impression of high purity and conscientiousness which we are used to associate with the old Quaker ideals. Hetty Waln, with her sharp tongue and her mania for house-cleaning, stands in amusing contrast to the poetic figures of her cousins; but we think that a woman of Hecla's dignity and refinement would have known how to stop Hetty's prying and impertinent interference with her private business. Indeed, we had always supposed that the Quaker upbringing imposed a decorous reticence of speech and thought; and it was with a sense of shock that we followed these Quakers in their unashamed discussion of their neighbours' love-affairs. It is possible, however, that the author is true to life, and the gossips of an American Quaker settlement may marry and give in marriage as brazenly and inconsiderately as he says they do. The hero, Richard Hallett, is an Englishman, and he boarded with a lady who talked of Shakespeare as the Bird of Avon.

The Pride o' the Morning. By AGNES GIBERNE. (Brown, Langham, 5s.)

THIS is a pleasant, well-written story, with a neat little plot, and some striking contrasts in character. There is the household where goodness reigns, a goodness of the strictest sect of the Pharisees, without charity or beauty, yet self-denying and fine in its way. Phyllis Wyverne is brought up in this atmosphere of repression, thoroughly grounded in all the virtues, except in patience to accept without inward rebellion the grey monotony of her days. Fate and a distant cousin are kind, and carry her off to the house in which beauty rules, where two lovers and a mystery await her. Phyllis (we hope her husband changed her name, or the spelling of it) discovers that the world contains some fascinating people, influenced by tastes and ideals hard to reconcile with the austere teaching of her old home, where beauty in any form was regarded as a snare, and amusement as something akin to wickedness. Phyllis is lovable beyond the ordinary run of heroines; if she disappoints us by her choice of the least interesting of her two lovers, we admit it is a provoking blunder sometimes made by dearer friends. Miss Giberne's people as a whole are so true to life that we forget to criticise them. We know, or can believe in, them all, even the lovely lady who, said to have no heart, yet overflows with sympathy toward friends and strangers, and takes trouble for them too. After all, sympathy is less a question of heart than of imagination; the gift of seeing for a moment with another's eyes. Miss Giberne has a pretty style of her own, and a dainty precision of expression that makes her story doubly interesting.

A Child of the Shore. By MIDDLETON FOX. (Lane, 6s.)

THERE are a number of novels—and we are getting a little tired of them—which rely almost entirely upon the charm

of their locality; the author creates what is called atmosphere and blows it, as it were, into the face of the reader to obscure the thinness of his story and the lack of vitality in his characters. Dim shapes flit in a white mist, and all is faded and monotonous, with occasional whiffs of sentiment and glimmerings of superstition. We have nothing to say against atmosphere—though the word is disgracefully misused—when it occupies its proper subordinate position, adding charm and finish to a piece of fiction; but where there is atmosphere and nothing else, we cannot refrain from protest. Mr. Fox's novel is atmospheric, with the result that in spite of occasional passages of some beauty in the actual writing, and an attractive way of introducing his story, as having its origin in the tales of the Droll-Tellers—who wandered fifty years ago from village to village through Cornwall—it is tedious. Minstrels they were, these Droll-Tellers, gossips too, and story-tellers. But the "droll" in question will not bear the length to which it is stretched; nor the weight of atmosphere with which it is charged. Mrs. Peters wishes for a child so much that she goes to old Mary Trebath and submits to strange ceremonies on the shore, which have the required effect. But her daughter Grace has an odd nature: gossips whisper she is too lovely, the lads shun her and think her part girl, part merry-maiden in touch with evil powers of the sea. She is betrayed by the squire's soldier son, and is avenged by his death by drowning when the merry-maiden draws him in a last embrace of love into the sea. There are good points in the story—notably the scene on the shore, which is of the eeriest—but the author continually digresses, stops in his narrative, as though consciously, to create that fatal essence to which we have referred, and his book fails to hold the interest which is raised by the first chapters.

BOOK SALES

THE sale held by Messrs. Sotheby on July 19, 20, 21 was chiefly notable for a first edition of *Waverley* which brought £131 (from Mr. W. Brown) or £19 less than was paid for another copy in the same rooms a few weeks ago. Other notable sales were *The first Part of the troublesome Raigne of John King of England*, etc., written by W. Shakespeare, 1622, bought by Messrs. Sotheran for £79, and the first edition of *Sheridan's School for Scandal* which brought £16 (Harford).

The other chief sales were: *Letter from Robert Burns to M. Thomas Campbell*. £12 5s. (Radford.) *Analysis of the Hunting Field*. First edition. 1846. £5 10s. (Spencer.) *Apperley's Life of a Sportsman*. First edition. 1842. £15; another copy, £14 15s. (Spencer.) *Fletcher (Phineas) The Purple Island*. 1633. £2 10s. (Thomas.) *Burlington Fine Arts Club: Catalogue of Exhibition of Silversmiths' Work*. 1901. £5 12s. 6d. (Batsford); *Catalogue of an Exhibition of Portrait Miniatures*. 1889. £14 15s. (Forrester); *Catalogue of European Enamels*. 1897. £4 6s. (Maggs.) *Houbraken and Vertue. Heads of Illustrious Persons*. 1747. £4 7s. 6d. (Jackson.) *Chaucer's Woorkes. Black letter*. 1561. £7 5s. (Maggs.) *Spenser's Faerie Queen*, etc. 1611. £4 15s. (Maggs.) *Alken's Symptons of Being Amused*. 1822. £4 6s. (Lewin.) *Hewitson's British Oology*. 2 vols. £4 15s. (Quaritch.) *Bewick's History of British Birds*. First edition. *Royal paper*. 2 vols. 1797-1804. £4 5s. (Edwards.) *Combe's English Dance of Death*. 2 vols. Original edition. 1815-16. £4 5s. (Hornstein.) *Analysis of the Hunting Field*. First edition. 1846. £6 5s. (Milligan.) *Hodgson's History of Northumberland*. 7 vols. 1820-58. £15 (Walford). *History of Westmorland and Cumberland*, by Nicolson and Burn. 2 vols. 1777. £5 (Greenwood). *Mackenzie's Account of Newcastle and Gateshead*. 2 vols. 1827. £3 12s. (Harding.) *Turner's Picturesque Views in England and Wales*. 2 vols. *Large paper*. 1838. £7 17s. 6d. (Edwards.) *Horsley's Britannia Romana*. 1732. £6 10s. (Bain.) *Drake's History of the City of York*. 1736. £4 (Maggs) *History of the County of Durham*, by Robert Surtees. 4 vols. 1816-40. £14 5s. *Catalogue of Works illustrated by Thomas and John Bewick*. 1851. £6 (Moore). *Butler's Hudibras*, 2nd part. First edition. 1664. £5 (Andrew). *Byron's The Bride of Abydos*. First edition. 1813. £4 4s. (Pickering.) *Shakespeare's Macbeth*, with alterations, etc., by Sir Wm. Davenant. 1687. £5 5s. (Sotheran.) *Illuminated Books of the Middle Ages*, by H. N. Humphreys. 1849. £4 18s. (Tregaskis.) *Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories and Tragedies*. Second folio. Imperfect. 1632. £11 15s. (Tregaskis.) *Heppelwhite's Cabinet and Upholsterer's Guide*, 1789. £7 5s. (Batsford.) *Hayley's Life of George Romney*. 1809. £5 (Dobell). *Blake's Daughters of Albion and Songs of Innocence*. £8 5s. (Maggs.) *Holbein's Portraits of Personages of the Court of Henry VIII*. 1828. £7 2s. 6d. (Forrester.) *Brontë*. First editions of *Shirley*, *Villette*, and *Wuthering*

Heights. 66 (Spencer). *Bombastes Furioso*, illustrated by G. Cruikshank. 1830. 47 7s. (Cradock.) Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads*. First edition (withdrawn from circulation by the publisher). 1866. Presentation copy with author's autograph inscription on title "to F. S. Waugh from A. C. S." 42 10s. (Quaritch.) *Sporting Magazine*, 1793 to 1807. 30 vols. 49 15s. (Spencer.) *Wagenar* (Luke) *The Mariner's Mirrour*. In 2 parts, black letter. 1588. The earliest book referring to the Spanish Armada. 425 10s. (Quaritch.)

The total amount realised was £1355 6s.

Messrs. Hodgson and Co. held their last sale of the season on July 19, 20, and 21.

The principal items were: *Real Life in London*. Illustrated by Alken, Rowlandson and others. First edition. 2 vols. 1821-2. 45 7s. 6d. *The Nuremberg Chronicle*. 1493. 49 17s. 6d. A collection of Cromwellian Tracts—57 bound in one volume. 43 14s. Stevenson's *New Arabian Nights*. First edition. 2 vols. 1882. 44 3s. Shelley's *Queen Mab*. First edition. 1813. 48 10s. Shadwell's *Works*. First collected edition. 4 vols. 1720. 42 10s. Coloured View of the City of Washington. 1834. 44. Ferrario (J.) *Costume Anticoe Moderno*. 17 vols. 1817-29. 44 12s. 6d. Hakluyt's *Voyages*. 12 vols. 1903-5. 46.

THE DRAMA

EXTREMES WITHOUT A MEAN

MR. JAMES HUNEKER, an American critic of the drama, has lately revised and collected a number of papers, and published them (in London with Mr. Werner Laurie, 6s. net) under the title of "*Iconoclasts—a Book of Dramatists*." What he means exactly by "iconoclasts" does not matter: a man must have a title for his book; and if the *icons* are taken to be the conventions and traditions of the school of Scribe and Sardou, then the subjects of his studies are iconoclasts indeed. They are all, in one way or another—Ibsen, Hauptmann, Shaw, Becque, Maeterlinck, Strindberg—dramatists who have either poured new wine into the old bottles, or brought it in new and sometimes very queer-shaped bottles of their own devising. Mr. Huneker is an interesting and a salutary critic. A slovenly writer, but erudite and alert, he is far removed from those who see the drama divorced from all other forms of expression. A play is, to him, a vehicle of ideas, just as much as a philosophical treatise, a novel, a picture or a piece of music; and he hunts down the idea which he supposes each play to contain with a happy mixture of keenness in tracking his quarry and hesitation about blowing his horn too loudly when he has found it.

The drama as a vehicle for ideas, as a means of expressing or perhaps only of seeking a truth, not as a source of "amusement" of whatever kind, nor as a subject merely for æsthetic appreciation; that is Mr. Huneker's topic. And the drama he likes best, the drama about which he writes best, is the symbolistic drama.

Roughly—very roughly—speaking, we have at present three kinds of play. There is the commonest form of all, in which there is, so to speak, no idea at all. The momentary excitement and interest of what happens is everything; and all that is asked of the audience is the power of sympathising with the joys and sorrows of the characters. Then there is the kind of play which starts from such an idea as can be expressed in the terms of the theatre, an idea which will be conveyed to the minds of the audience by the act of watching the fortunes of the people in the play, and is easily grasped without previous study or more than average intelligence. Such are some of the best of our English plays, plays by Mr. Pinero and Mr. Jones, and plays by Mr. Bernard Shaw—with this difference, that Mr. Shaw's ideas are often too freakish in themselves or too cunningly wrapped in a show of freakishness to be easily understood by the average intelligence of an audience. Still, his plays fall under our second category, because in most cases the idea, if you succeed in pinning it down or stripping it of its disguises is, after all, a simple and perfectly plain one. Most of the modern French plays would come under the same head. Since Henry Becque (a dramatist to whom Mr. Huneker does fine justice) upset the conventional and sentimental apple-cart that was blocking the way, his suc-

cessors in the art present us, almost always, however airily or solemnly they may treat it, with some idea drawn from the study of some aspect of life, an idea that may be put into words and carried away by all as, in some sense, the "moral" of the play.

Beyond this there comes a point when the play itself is incapable of expressing the idea which lay in the dramatist's mind. From watching the actions of the characters and hearing them speak, it cannot be gathered what the playwright "meant." People will go away and dispute, not only over the "moral," the *residuum*, the idea, of the play as a whole, but over the actual meaning and interpretation of each character in it. In the case of the acted drama, the presumption is always that the audience watching a play at any given moment has never seen the play before, and has had no opportunity of studying its characters and plot. They come unprepared; their minds must necessarily be distracted by the mere presence of so many other people, and, not less, by the external things, the outward appearance of the actors and actresses, the actual happenings upon the stage. And the whole thing will be over in three hours. They cannot, even the most intelligent and most concentrated minds among them, do, in those conditions, a great deal of hard thinking.

But there are many plays, and many great plays, which cannot be understood without a great deal of hard thinking. It may be that, as with Ibsen, the profundity of the author's thought is such that it cannot be plumbed without study, without some knowledge of the philosophical movements of the day; such, indeed, that the author himself cannot express it in terms of the theatre. Any one who has happened to see acted a play of Ibsen's before he knew more of Ibsen than the name, would have, we believe, to admit that it meant very little to him, if anything. If he were an honest and simple soul, he would probably have to confess that he joined the sufferers and laughed—to repent humbly of his hilarity after, in the privacy of his study, he had applied himself to Ibsen as a whole under conditions in which he could ponder undistracted on the meaning of his dramas. The profundity of Shakespeare is revealed more and more at every reading in the study; but there is this difference, among a million others, between Ibsen and Shakespeare, that Shakespeare on the stage offers in every play something—a good story of external happenings—to the least thoughtful or learned of his audience. The internal developments have their counterpart in the external. With Ibsen, if you miss the internal action, the "becoming" of the characters, there is nothing left. Their words are but symbols of their thoughts; their very thoughts are but symbols of changes and developments more deeply hidden still.

With a playwright like Maeterlinck, who, in his totally different manner, even more frankly uses the words and actions of his characters as a musical composer uses notes, for the expression of things which words and actions of themselves cannot express, the average, the unprepared spectator is in still worse plight. He sees strange and beautiful figures moving in strange and beautiful scenes and talking a strange language which is limpid to childishness. He is conscious, perhaps, of vague stirrings, and a sense of dissatisfied groping after an elusive something that he cannot catch, yet knows to be quite close to him—or, perhaps, he laughs outright. Again, should he go home and study Maeterlinck, the essayist, the poet, the mystic, he will repent of his laughter. And then, as likely as not, he will resolve never to see a Maeterlinck play acted again. He will say to himself: "The meaning of this is so fine, so remote, so delicate, that the stage, instead of bringing it closer, drives it away. These actors and actresses are not violins or horns, which, played under the will of a single conductor, will infallibly give exactly what they were meant to give and no more: they are sentient and willing beings with notions of their own, uncontrolled by any master. And besides—if I cannot get a seat near the stage, I shall not see the subtleties of expression by which they do their best to interpret their author. I can make

a Sélvsette, a Mélisande, an Ygraine, much better for myself, here by my fire."

The truth is that the stage is a clumsy means of expression, cramped by all sorts of material conditions, at the mercy of all kinds of external difficulties. And when we read Mr. Huneker, and some of our more academic London critics of the drama, we cannot help thinking that it is not the drama on the stage, but the drama in the study that they are really discussing. They go to the theatre more as a matter of curiosity, to see how the acted play will come up to or fall short of all that it has meant to them when read in the light of their own learning and thought, than with any idea of adding to their knowledge of its meaning. The theatre—the mere theatre—must bore them terribly. They and those who can follow them should have a theatre of their own—subsidised or unsubsidised; and it would be the only theatre at which a great many of us would feel certain that we should be interested.

But—with our English drama in its present state—the point is not where the few shall find what they want, but how the many—the indispensable many without whom no ordinary theatre can exist—shall be provided with a drama, simple, straightforward, easily intelligible, but still blessed with ideas, still telling the truth about a lot of things on which our present stages are telling outrageous lies every night. We have some notions on the subject, which may see the light some day; but our point for the present is that there is too great a distance between the predilections of Mr. Huneker and his like and the common food of the average playgoer. The playwrights who stretch the drama beyond its appointed limits, who regard it as music or crystal-gazing or metaphysics, are not the playwrights who will revivify a lifeless art.

FINE ART

THE ARTS IN THE MIDDLE AGES

We have before us the first part of the first volume ("Des débuts de l'Art Chrétien à la Fin de la Période Romaine") of a new "Histoire de l'Art depuis les Premiers Temps Chrétiens jusqu'à nos jours," published by Armand Colin in Paris (15fr.), and edited by M. André Michel.

In associating with himself a strong body of colleagues including many distinguished names, M. André Michel has done wisely, for his period and his subject bristle with diverse and complicated problems, few of which have been solved to universal satisfaction. Yet the literature of mediæval criticism is fast becoming too bulky for all who cannot devote their lives to its study, so that, in making this admirable summary of the results of modern research, M. Michel has achieved something for which there was a real need. The book has, of course, its weak points, for the contributors do not all write with the clearness and sense of proportion displayed in such a chapter as that by M. Émile Molinier on "L'Art de L'Époque Barbare," to mention a single example. It is natural, too, that a work composed in the main by French authors should be occupied to a considerable extent with monuments found on the historic soil of France, but the fault is a venial one, not only because France is really of the highest importance in the history of the making of Modern Art, but also because none of the writers are patriots first and critics afterwards. The volume may thus fairly be termed sound, interesting and, when we consider its bulk and its two hundred illustrations, marvellously cheap as well.

Of the various sections, that dealing with Architecture will perhaps be found the least convincing. English readers already possess Mr. Lethaby's recently published study of the subject, and will miss in this larger work the never-failing grip of the principles of construction which characterises his book. Much, of course, may be learned from decoration, but it is to structure that we

must turn for a safe guide as to origins and influences. The painter, the mosaic worker, and the sculptor are of necessity specialists. Their crafts are artificial, and called for only on great occasions. Painters, mosaic workers, and sculptors thus tend to be itinerants; their achievement may undoubtedly produce an effect on the arts of the town in which they happen to work, but their presence does not imply of necessity the existence of any general art impulse in their vicinity. The architect, however, cannot do his work with his own hands, and in the Middle Ages had to employ the labourers and the materials of the district in which he worked. Those labourers, since building is a trade in common demand and not employed only on state occasions, had to possess some knowledge of their craft and some fixed ideas of construction, even if their work was directed by some imported Master Mason. Mediæval buildings thus tend to have more local and racial character than the decoration within them, especially when that decoration takes any elaborate form.

For this reason architecture is rightly regarded as the surest guide through the apparent maze of styles and influences which constitute mediæval art. When its cardinal principles are grasped we find it comparatively easy to follow the evolution of church building, and to trace the development of the Roman and Byzantine forms till they are combined with ruder northern strength in the Romanesque, and then to study the subsequent passage from Romanesque to Gothic, even though there may still be gaps and doubtful links in the chain of evidence.

When we come to the graphic arts, the book is more satisfactory. Both mosaic and painting are treated in detail, and a long series of reproductions illustrates in a striking manner the essential continuity of these arts from first to last. The frescoes of the Catacombs, the majestic apse of S. Pudenziana, and sculptures such as those on the famous Lateran sarcophagus, exhibit the classical tradition in overwhelming predominance. Then for centuries that tradition is modified, enriched, and at last weakened by the splendid hieratic art of Byzantium (also half Greek), until the grafting of the two is quickened by the coming of the new learning, and in the fine flower of Renaissance art we find once more the fragrance of ancient Greece.

M. Molinier's essay, to which we have already referred, is for English readers by no means the least interesting part of the book. The Oriental origin of the decoration of the famous Irish manuscripts and of the sculptures analogous to them has long been more than a theory. M. Molinier devotes his time to considering the golden weapons and ornaments found in the supposed tomb of Childeric and a number of similar pieces of metal work such as those comprised in the "Treasure of Petrossa." These he proves quite conclusively to be of Persian origin, if not always of Persian workmanship. The objects themselves are interesting, not only as indicating how far Oriental work had permeated Europe so early as the fifth century, and as being the foundation of the art of enamelling in Europe, but also from their connection with similar finds in England, of which the jewel of King Alfred is perhaps the most famous. When we seem to note Oriental influences in English paintings and English embroidery of a later date, we can no longer dismiss the resemblance as a mere coincidence, but have to recognise that our island was inspired by the art of the East hardly less continuously, if somewhat less richly, than the countries bordering upon the Mediterranean.

C. J. H.

LYSIPPUS

THERE are many literary tasks which would seem best left to Frenchmen. Their language lends itself to the needs of those who do not deceive themselves but understand how often the *à peu près* is the most they should hope for. A slight knowledge of the delusions which have prevailed even in regard to the attribution of works of art produced within the memory of old men now alive, ought to be

sufficient to make our critics content to know far less than it at present pleases them to do. Most of us, however, are determined, like the Germans, to be authorities: since we come of a fighting stock, to domineer seems sweeter than to be just, or nice, or reasonable. M. Maxime Collignon has profited by German thoroughness in research, and yet has produced a readable, almost an entertaining, book ("Lysippe": *Série des grands Artistes*. Paris: Librairie Renouard) on a Greek sculptor of whom we do not possess a single original work. His scholarship is not only adequate but under perfect control, yet he remains from first to last diffident, as well as clear and precise.

Lysippus was the sculptor who best succeeded in rendering the beauty of Alexander the Great; his name comes last among those of the great period. This monograph with fine tact marshals before the intelligent public the surviving copies and ancient texts bearing on his work, without any tendency to flaunt them as a challenge to a narrow ring of specialists. No possible *agrément* is omitted; when Plutarch must be cited it is Amyot's translation, so sound, so classical, that its antiquated diction is pure gain. Perhaps, had M. Collignon enlarged upon the æsthetic estimate of the works passed in review, his book might have become not only interesting but inspiring. The question of questions is never that of origin or authorship, but the value of each work for us now, and, historically, the value which it had for cultivated Greeks. In this direction M. Collignon seems unimaginative; yet surely in a work of popularisation to appraise the art treated of should be the main effort. On the question of "Canons of Proportion," so little understood, he touches, if surely, so lightly that this, too, appears a missed opportunity. The saying attributed to Lysippus, that "the ancient sculptors shaped men as they are while he shaped them as they appear to be," is not really made significant by reference to modern impressionism; for Lysippus was recognised as in many respects more factual than Phidias and Polycletus. And yet Pliny says:

"Lysippus effected a great stride forward in sculpture . . . by making the heads smaller than the older sculptors, the bodies drier and more spare, in order to give his statues a more taper build."

The kind of contrast that exists between the works of Degas or Fantin-Latour and those of Michelangelo or Rubens is quite different, we imagine, from the contrast between the works of Lysippus and those of his predecessors. Both he and they were intent on rendering the beauty and dignity of life. He had never dreamed of taking an interest in man and horse and dog apart from their comparative superiority over others of their kind. The statistical or scientific interest in such things would have seemed to him unsuited to the purpose of art. Yet M. Collignon quotes from one of O. Rayet's notices on "The Monuments of Antique Art" a long passage, the terms of which would better suit the works of Donatello or Rodin than those of any Greek. We stare at "a faithful rendering of individual particularities," and at "the innumerable accidents of human nature." The Greeks, like the Japanese, had a totally different notion as to what fidelity to nature might mean from that prevalent among us. Hokusai said; "Dutch art strives to deceive the eye, Japanese art to render life," and we might add: "Greek art to make beauty live." If Lysippus made many figures eight heads high, it was for the same reason that Michelangelo often made them ten heads high, and not because he happened upon models who exhibited those proportions. He found that statues with such proportions looked more slim, lithe and alert, and it was that accent of human beauty which he preferred. His fidelity to nature remains of the same kind as that of Phidias, for all his daring. That a statue might represent an ugly, ravaged, or brutalised form, such as Donatello or Rodin has chosen, would have been an idea infinitely more repugnant to him than to Michelangelo, who nevertheless instinctively avoided such subjects. Modern impressionism would have appeared ridiculous to Michelangelo; he would have been far more unjust to it

than he is reported to have been to Flemish painting; how much more, then, Lysippus?

The neglect of major distinctions such as these perpetuates the confusion of æsthetic standards and forces taste to appear most unduly an affair of individual caprice. M. Collignon must pardon us if we limit our praise of his admirable volume by these reservations.

ART SALES

ON Thursday, 20th inst., Messrs. Christie disposed of a collection of jewels, the property of a lady of title, and a number of good prices were realised. A pearl necklace, consisting of forty-five graduated pearls of fine Orient, the clasp set with a cabochon ruby and two brilliants, brought £3150 (Lindenbaum); a tiara comprising nine graduated pear-shaped brilliants, £1980 (Hughes); a large brilliant ornament formed as interlaced cipher L, and branches of foliage, with four large square brilliant drops, an octagonal emerald in the centre, £1240 (S. H. Harris); a large square-shaped brilliant mounted as a brooch, £610 (Lindenbaum); a tortoiseshell hair-comb, surmounted by five pear-shaped brilliants and five small diamonds, £470 (Lewis); a pearl and brilliant circular open cluster brooch—large bouton pearl in centre, with border of 14 brilliants—£140 (S. J. Phillips); and a fine pear-shaped brilliant, unmounted, £155 (Amor).

In the sale on Wednesday, at Messrs. Christie's, of Oriental porcelain, etc., the property of the late Sir Richard T. Rennie, porcelain, etc., the property of the late Sir George Elliot, and from various sources, part of an old Sèvres dessert service, painted with garlands of flowers and twisted blue ribbons, 16 pieces, brought 120 gs. (C. Davis); a pair of oblong panels of old Brussels tapestry, with scenes from Roman history, 115 gs. (Van Straaten); a pair of Bristol cups and saucers, sugar-basin and cover, and cream jug and basin, 73½ gs.; an ivory diptych (French, early 15th century) carved with four subjects from the life of the Virgin, 65 gs. (L. Harris); an oblong panel of old Brussels tapestry, with figures and animals in a wood, 65 gs. (Huggins); a *famille-verte* cylindrical vase, enamelled with a tournament and river scene round neck, 52 gs. (Dickinson); a *famille-verte* vase, enamelled with dragons and flowers on *rouge-de-fer* ground, 51 gs. (Wills); and an Oriental oviform vase and cover, with prunus blossom on marbled-blue ground, and a jar nearly similar, 50 gs. (Philpot).

With the sale of ancient and modern pictures and water-colour drawings, the property of the late Mr. George Fowler Jones, and from various sources, Messrs. Christie brought their Art Sales season to an end. The most interesting lot was a portrait (attributed to an artist of the Raffaele school) of a gentleman, nearly full face, half figure, in black gown, with narrow white band at the neck, which realised 880 gs. (Wells). A Rembrandt, head of a young man on panel, brought 100 gs. (Cavens); Watteau's "A Fête Champêtre" unframed, 100 gs. (Coureau); Rev. W. Peters' Head of a Lady, 78 gs. (Permain); Kellner's portrait of Lady Pye, in brown and blue dress, 52 gs. (Shepherd); and a Stothard, "Victory and Charity," 45 gs. (Waylett).

On the same day Messrs. Sotheby sold a number of engravings. Two after Hoppner—Mrs. Denwell, by W. Ward, and Sophia Western, by J. R. Smith—realised £54 and £36 respectively (P. Phillips); a pair—"Venus attired by the Graces" and "The Judgment of Paris"—after Angelica Kauffmann, by Bartolozzi, in colours, £40 (Sabin); and a series of ten coloured aquatint portraits of the winning horses of the Great St. Leger Stakes at Doncaster, 1815-24, after Herrington, by Sutherland, £55 (Robson).

Two interesting curios were included in Mr. J. C. Stevens' sales last week. A perfect specimen of human bone devil-dancing costume from Tibet, comprising an apron, two armlets, etc., of the bones of deceased Lamas, carved with images of Buddha, and a death's head made of a single piece of lacquer, to be used with the bone costume, realised £100; and a contemporary death mask of Oliver Cromwell, in perfect condition, £80.

MUSIC

DE MUSICA NOVA

II. THE BRAHMS STANDPOINT

NOT long ago Mr. George Henschel, addressing the Royal Institution of Great Britain, took as his subject: "Personal Recollections of Johannes Brahms." I have received a copy of his paper, and have found it delightful reading, since it consists almost entirely of a diary, jotted down while making a holiday tour with Brahms in 1876. There is, of course, a danger in making public the private sayings and doings of a great man, the danger of magnifying that

which is not great, of taking some lightly spoken word for profound utterance. Even when the writer, as here, is in too close sympathy with his subject to err in this respect, it is possible for the reader, who has only the words, neither hearing the voice nor seeing the surroundings, to do so. Nevertheless, while we sometimes smile at Boswell, we are always grateful to him; and I cannot help thinking that Mr. Henschel has kept his diary with a touch of Boswell's genius. The incidents and conversations recorded give one many an interesting sidelight upon the character of Brahms; but there are, too, in it some pieces of practical advice on composition given by Brahms to Mr. Henschel, which show his attitude towards his work in a most striking manner. One is led to see how this attitude placed him upon an infinitely higher level than any composer has occupied since Beethoven. Mr. Henschel records a conversation which goes to the root of the matter thus:

"I went to Brahms' room last night. He had been reading, but, putting away his book, gave me a cordial welcome and began looking through my new manuscript songs. He took up the one in E flat, 'Where Angels hover,' and said, 'Now there is a charming song. In some of the others you seem to me too easily satisfied. One ought never to forget that by actually perfecting *one* piece, one gains and learns more than by commencing or half finishing a dozen. Let it rest, let it rest, and keep going back to it and working at it over and over again, until it is completed as a finished work of art, until there is not a note too much or too little, not a bar you could improve upon. Whether it is beautiful also is an entirely different matter, but perfect it *must* be. You see, I am lazy, but I never cool down over a work, once begun, until it is perfected, unassailable.'"

Here lies the secret; Brahms started from a standpoint of technical perfection, and went on from that to the expression of all that is beautiful and emotional in music. It was not that he put the technical perfection foremost, but he put it first, as the essential foundation upon which alone he could safely plant his feet to reach up to the higher things of the art. This attitude is the direct opposite of that adopted by all modern musicians, from the romantic school of Schumann onwards, through Wagner, Berlioz, Tchaikovsky, Strauss. Of all of these, widely different as their ideals were or are, it may be said that, starting from their sense of beauty, they try through that to attain some sort of technical proficiency. It is probably due to this complete reversal of the modern standpoint in Brahms that he has been accused of undervaluing the element of emotional beauty in music, and this sentence of his might at first sight give a colour of truth to the accusation. In reality, however, it conclusively proves the contrary. He held the beauty of music so high that about it he did not attempt to dogmatise. He realised it as a gift to men, which might be present or not present, but he maintained that what we have a right to demand is that the thought shall be clothed in perfect expression, that whether the stone be the rare diamond or the pebble from the sea-shore, it must be perfectly cut and polished.

"'There is no real creating,' he said, 'without hard work. That which you would call invention, that is to say, a thought, an idea, is simply an inspiration from above for which I am not responsible, which is no merit of mine. Yea, it is a present, a gift, which I ought even to despise until I have made it my own by right of hard work.'"

As an illustration he quotes here the first phrase of his wonderful "Mainacht" song, as the germ of inspiration from which the rest sprang. Almost every one now is prepared to acknowledge the greatness of Brahms, though many turn from him to what are to them more congenial paths. While that sense of mastery and sublime repose, with which Brahms inspires us, is attributable to this uncompromising standpoint, it is likewise answerable for the slowness with which his music gains in popularity. It was Wagner's proudest boast that his music could be appreciated by all and needed not the special knowledge of the musician. Popularity is certainly the only ultimate test of the worth of a work of art, but it is the worst possible immediate test. One may safely predicate that if a piece of music has not within it the possibility of attaining popularity, it is bad art, it has missed its mark, it has not

in fact that "inspiration from above" of which Brahms spoke, and which is to be found in the sheer beauty of a melodic phrase or the subtle joy of a magical harmonic progression. But it is only when these things fill the foreground, so to speak, that the work can become immediately popular. With Wagner it was almost always so; he accepted the "gift," poured out to him in such unstinted measure, and his mind was often too much occupied with considerations other than of music to allow him to "make it his own by right of hard work" as Brahms did. Consequently, Wagner's popularity was destined to come as soon as his work was given a fair hearing; that of Brahms is only just beginning to dawn and will probably not arrive at the full light of day in the present generation. Still, the dawn is sufficiently clear to make it possible to predict a radiantly glorious day, and probably the chief danger lies in his becoming too generally acknowledged before his work is universally loved. English people especially have a terrible tendency, when once a man and his work have passed beyond the range of controversy, to tolerate, that is to stop at the very point at which true criticism begins, the point where, being fully assured that the work is of the highest order, every individual person has to test it by the light of his own inward convictions, to discover how far it is for him a full expression of the ideal. In present-day musical literature Brahms is often spoken of as the last of the great classics, as though he were a man born after his time instead of immeasurably before it. This is partly due to a wholly fortuitous accident. From the time when Brahms wrote to the present day almost all the attention of composers and audiences has been directed towards orchestral development, and for this Brahms cared little. The very fact of his arrangement of most of his orchestral works for piano duets shows that this was at any rate not the essence of his mission. In spite of such masterly pieces of scoring as the Tragic Overture and the Finale in the Fourth Symphony, it is true that this phase of musical history will have to pass over; we must wait until the orchestra has ceased to fill our view before we can come on to appreciate what Brahms really was. Mr. W. H. Hadow, whose critical estimate of Brahms is amongst the most far-sighted, says of him that he was "born to restore the classical traditions," and this, if it means anything at all, must mean more than that he wrote works in sonata form on the lines of Beethoven. People often speak as though by a sort of *tour de force* he succeeded in establishing a more or less satisfactory compromise between the modern tendency towards unrestricted expression and the old classical formulæ to which he affectionately clung. Such an achievement, however, could not be considered as a restoration, nor could the man who made it be anything but a clever follower of two widely different schools. The restorer of classical traditions must be a leader, one who not only attains, but opens the door and points the way to others. If this leadership is to be found in Brahms, it will probably be easier for us to detect it in a branch of the art in which we do not live and move daily, than in orchestral music in which at present our "ears are dinn'd with uproar rude." If we turn away into the undisturbed region of chamber music, if we slip into some well nigh deserted concert-hall and hear the great Sestett in G, divinely played, we can more fully realise the great road along which Brahms marched, and along which others shall advance further, when all side issues, such as effects of colour and expression and harmonic possibilities, shall be settled. Here we see the standpoint upon which Brahms insisted to Henschel put to practical use. Look for a moment at the opening of this work; the rise of the fifth over the two chords of G and E^b. Here is the germ of which he spoke. Splendid, exhilarating as it is, it and its like may be found in countless numbers scattered through the works of Wagner and even Tchaikovsky. But Brahms had a sense of its value which led him to a treatment of it beyond the reach of any modern composer. With complete command of every technical resource he drives it home until

our ears ring with it. For the first hundred bars he never leaves the key of G major; and yet with this wonderful progression we seem to soar with him above all restrictions of key, and when, with a mysterious hush, he glides on to a chord of B major, the change seems perfectly natural and easy, long before we realise that this is only the logical counterpart of the first progression. Throughout, the extraordinary closeness of the texture amazes us; every note seems necessary to the logical development of this; all is relevant, all proportioned.

In thus emphasising the example of Brahms I hope it is unnecessary to defend myself against the charge of prophesying that the composers of the future will rewrite him. Better an age of the wildest vagaries than one of respectable copyists! I do believe, however, that there is something, of which we now tend to lose sight, that was a vital part of Brahms' work, and is also a vital part of music at its greatest. I believe that to some extent composers must return to this standpoint, partially expressed in words to Henschel, completely and beautifully expressed in his own musical language, before the next great mountain top is reached. One more quotation from the diary I must make, as it contributes to the comprehension of Brahms' standpoint.

"At last, he smilingly said: 'Well, I am not at all ashamed to own that it gives me the keenest pleasure if a song, an adagio, or anything of mine, has turned out particularly good. How must those gods, Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, etc., have felt whose daily bread it was to write things like the "Matthew Passion," "Don Giovanni," "Fidelio," "Ninth Symphony"! What I cannot understand is how people like myself can be vain. As much as we men, who walk upright, are above the creeping things of the earth, so these gods are above us. If it were not so ludicrous it would be loathsome to me to hear colleagues of mine praise me to my face in such an exaggerated manner.'"

This is surely no mere expression of modesty, but the revelation of the childlike mind that enters into the Kingdom of Heaven.

H. C. C.

CORRESPONDENCE

MEREDITH AND BROWNING AND THE CRITICS

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—My absence from home with continuous reposting of your papers, explains the delay in replying to the letters answering my first relating to Browning and Meredith. The letters in reply mostly partake of the nature of apologies rather than refutations. They strike a note of sympathy with the authors referred to, and plead for forbearance, apparently on the ground that the said authors are hard to understand by the ordinary mortal, and can only be judged by doubly refined ecstatic souls. Fortunately for the human race, there are not many of these souls about. The fact is that Browning and Meredith are representatives of hammered out artificialism in literature, which like the impressionist school in art, is naturally distasteful to the general public, for the reason that it is neither robust nor inspiring. I once went to an exhibition of pictures in Bond Street, in which the work most praised by the critics was one showing a green donkey eating blue grass. I pointed out this peculiar feature to the gentleman in attendance, and he observed that it was sometimes difficult without much study to understand the schemes of the artist responsible for the picture. I do not wish to compare this artist with Browning or Meredith, but the answer to my criticism was much about the same as that contained in most of the replies to my letter. The inference is obvious.

I have no desire to pose as a critic of the critics, but experience shows that while in matters of serious literature, such as history and biography, the critics are almost invariably sound in their judgment, in matters of taste and expression such as poetry and fiction they are commonly wrong. The records of the last century amply prove this, and no fact is better known. Nothing veneered or artificial, such as the dramas of Tennyson, nearly the whole of Browning's poems, and Meredith's novels, can live, however propped up by the critics. It is the same in art. Landseer painted stuffed animals with human eyes, and Leighton painted anatomical expressions under classical titles. Both were lauded by the critics into knighthood, but where are they now in the public estimation as artists? Rossetti and Burne-Jones, who adulterated their great artistic powers with an incongruous æstheticism, are still protected by the halo of laudatory criticism, but how much longer will their painted dolls be taken for women? How long, think you, will it be before the public recognises that the spiritual fervour breathed into a Fra Angelico or a Botticelli, cannot be sucked back from the fifteenth century and applied to a creation of the nineteenth? All that is forced or artificial must go. Burne-Jones

and Rossetti, with the sickly "impressionists," must give way with Browning and Meredith, and the robust and natural will live. This is the lesson taught by all experience. It is also another confirmation of the law of the "survival of the fittest."

Florence, July 22.

A MAN IN THE STREET.

MR. MEREDITH'S NOVELS

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—I only wish by the time this letter reaches you the contention of your correspondent "A Man in the Street" in the ACADEMY of June 24 is not deservedly forgotten. The English, Sir, is a foreign tongue to me; and little as I have read of its literature I, fortunately, have not ignored Mr. Meredith. I may be forgiven for having read the novels of Mr. Meredith from page to page. In them he may be terse, "difficult," at times poetically vague to need kind sympathy in his readers to follow his fleeting allusions of life; and yet they have intellect; they are the creations of a man of genius the mark of whose mind is seen over every page. I do not say I have understood every word of Mr. Meredith; this indeed would be a phenomenon, and a greater one were I to boast such knowledge of Shakespeare. He, to me, has never been so "difficult" as to tempt me to let his books lie on the shelf unread. I admit Mr. Meredith has created one great difficulty. He has perplexed me as to his greatest book. I hold by "The Egoist"; but "The Ordeal," "Beauchamp's Career," "Diana," and "The Amazing Marriage" do really haunt one's judgment.

I am really surprised to learn there can ever be two questions about Mr. Meredith's novels. It must be an exaggerated sense of truth that dictates an ordinarily well-read man to confess his failure to appreciate Mr. Meredith. No critics ever misguided me to buying Mr. Meredith's books; they are as great a treasure as the works of any other English novelist, not barring Scott.

As to the "Browning" part of your correspondent's letter, I may be allowed to say that no one who does not love Browning has a right to live in Florence.

Bombay, July 7.

F.

BRITISH NOVELISTS

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—The mention, by M.D., in a supplementary list of British novelists, of Miss Fowler reminds me of a greater omission—Mr. Henry Harland. The only point of connection between the two authors is the inveterate eloquence of the chief personages of their books—of Miss Fowler's heroines, of Mr. Harland's heroes. Their difference lies in the fact that Mr. Harland has style, distinction, scholarship, wit.

Would it not, Sir, be an extremely sporting event if the two authors above-mentioned should—in collaboration—effect a marriage between, say, Isabel Carnegie and, for choice, the hero of "My Friend Prospero"?

We might then, indeed, look forward to conversational fireworks—of several descriptions!

July.

E. K. LINTON.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM READING ROOM

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—In May 1907 the Reading Room at the British Museum will have been open for fifty years. It was opened to the public for inspection on Saturday, May 9, 1857, and continued thus open until and including the following Saturday, May 16. On Monday, May 18, it was opened for the use of readers only. It appears to have been opened without any ceremony or formality of any kind.

On p. 12 of the guide-book to the "Reading Room and New Library" occurs the following passage; "The separate compartments of the dome are marked by bold enriched gilt consoles, which form at once the supports of the main ribs and the bases for the statues which Sir A. Panizzi proposed to erect round the cornice."

At South Kensington (Victoria and Albert Museum) there is, in the Architectural Court, numbered 349-1890, a "Model to scale of the Reading Room at the British Museum showing the plan of the Internal Decoration proposed by Alfred Stevens." (Born 1817, died 1875.) It is the decoration of the dome that is here alluded to, but statues are shown on the consoles, and I think it will be admitted that they alone, without further decoration, would greatly enhance the beauty of the room and give it an appearance of finish which it does not at present possess.

The most appropriate way of celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the room, on May 9, 1907, would be, it seems to me, to have the statues which were originally intended to adorn it made and put into the places that have been waiting for them so long and unveiled on that date, so that at the end of fifty years the room may eventually be complete. Before, however, they could be put into place it would be necessary to have the dome cleaned—for it is now filthy—and the room restored to its original beauty, if Stevens' plan of decoration be not carried out. Thereafter it ought to be kept as bright and clean as the King's Library is.

There are twenty consoles, and here follow, by way of suggestion, the names of twenty persons of whom statues might be erected, ten of them being English and ten non-English: Chaucer, Bacon (Francis), Shakespeare, Milton, Newton, Scott, Dickens, Tennyson, Darwin, Herbert Spencer; Homer, Confucius, Buddha, Socrates, Plato, Dante, Cervantes, Molière, Goethe, Franklin.

July 21.

HUBERT HAES.

"HAARSTRAÜBEND"

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—To any one moderately familiar with the German tongue as she is spoken, written, or printed, it must be *haarsträubend* to read in last week's ACADEMY that that most expressive word—one which very soon catches the fancy of an Englishman in Germany—is an invention of Professor Fischel of Berlin "who was compelled to coin it" to describe Borrow's "weird etymologies." Surely the statement is a weird one. *Haarsträubend* is not certainly *Mittelhochdeutsch*; but it is used in the first scene of the first act of *Schroffenstein* by Heinrich von Kleist (1776–1811), whom the "Encyclopædia Britannica"—though it does not honour him with an entry or an article in the body of the book, or the famous supplement—calls "the most distinguished dramatist of the Romantic school." Kleist shot himself nearly forty years before Professor Fischel, the eminent Berlin Sanskritist, was born. And Grimm's "Deutsches Wörterbuch" gives examples of the use of *haarsträubend* precisely in the modern metaphorical sense from 1865 onwards—when Fischel was an unknown student and nearly thirty years before he published his "Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Deutschen Zigeuner."

The wild account of the "coining" of *haarsträubend* does not diminish the vivacity or interest of the article on the "Lavo-lil," but it invites tenderness for Borrow's flights of fancy in constructive etymology.

July 21.

D. P.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF GOLF

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—Mr. Balfour, writing in *C. B. Fry's Magazine*, says of golf that it is the "most difficult game that perhaps exists."

What is the true meaning of this cryptic sentence? Is it merely an instance of faulty syntax, or is it really meant to express "philosophic doubt"?

July 24.

J. B. WALLIS.

BOOKS RECEIVED

ART.

Evans, J. T. *The Church Plate of Pembrokeshire*. Roberts, 21s.

BIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIRS.

Dilke, Lady. *The Book of the Spiritual Life*. With Memoir of the Author by the Right Hon. Sir Charles W. Dilke. Murray, 10s. 6d. net. (See p. 774.)

EDUCATION.

Round the World: *Our Colonial Cousins, or Britain Beyond the Seas*. By W. Vere Mingard. Jack, 1s. 6d.
 "Round the World" Geographical Handbooks: *Our English Home*. By C. W. Crook and W. H. Weston. Jack, 4d.
 Mathematical Series: *The Three Terms Arithmetic*. Books I. II. and III. By J. W. Illiffe. Jack, 2d. each.

FICTION.

Hume, Fergus. *The Opal Serpent*. Long, 6s.
 Comstock, Seth Cook. *The Rebel Prince*. Long, 6s.
 Yorke, Curtis. *Alix of the Glen*. Long, 6s.
 Kelly, W. Patrick. *The Assyrian Bride*. Routledge, 6s.
 Fraed, Mrs. Campbell. *The Maid of the River*. Long, 6s.
 Meade, L. T. *His Mascot*. Long, 6s.
 Cleeve, Lucas. *Saint Elizabeth of London*. Long, 6s.
 Capes, Bernard. *A Jay of Italy*. Methuen, 6s. (See p. 784.)
 Gould, Nat. *One of a Mob*. Long, 2s. 6d. and 2s.
 Tolstoy, Leo. *Ivan Ilyitch*. The Story of a Russian burraucrat. Translated by Henry Bergen. Fiffeld, 6d.

MILITARY.

Brooke, Lord. *An Eye-Witness in Manchuria*. Eveleigh Nash, 7s. 6d.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Thomas, Northcote W. *Crystal Gazing* (with introduction by Andrew Lang); and *Thought Transference*. De la More Press, 3s. 6d. net each.
 Sturge, M. Carta. *Thoughts Transcendental and Practical*. Clifton: Baker; London: Simpkin Marshall.

POLITICS.

A Letter to the Labour Party. Thoughts on the Future of Labour. By G. W. Kitchen, Dean of Durham. Fiffeld, 3d. net.

REPRINTS.

Purchas, Samuel B.D. *Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas his Pilgrimes*. Containing a History of the World in Sea Voyages and Land Travells by Englishmen and Others. Vols. V. and VI. Glasgow: MacLehose, 12s. 6d. net each.
 Poets and Poetry of the Nineteenth Century: *William Morris to Robert Buchanan*. Routledge, 1s. net.
 Smollett, Tobias. *The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom*. Classic Novels. Hutchinson, 1s. 6d. net.
 Swift, Jonathan. *Gulliver's Travels*. Newnes' Penny Library.

SCIENCE.

Hatch, F. H.; and Corstorphine, G. S. *The Geology of South Africa*. Macmillan, 21s. net.

THE BOOKSHELF

AN excellent example of American "hustle" is afforded by the rapidity with which the successive volumes of the *Jewish Encyclopedia* follow fast on each other's heels. Only two months ago vol. ix. was reviewed in these columns, and already we are confronted with vol. x., *Philipson—Samoser* (Funk and Wagnall, 25s.). This quickness of production has rendered the volume marvellously up to date, as can be seen by the fact that it contains a reference to the assassination of the Grand Duke Sergius. The most important article and one, moreover, which possesses at the present time an especial interest, is the long and exhaustive contribution on Russia, which gives an admirable account of the Jewish position and shows that the reactionary persecution to which the Jews are subjected only results in a quickening of the national energy and consciousness. Among the other articles, we would mention in particular "Reform Judaism," by Drs. Emil Hirsch and Philipson and "Joseph Saadia" by Dr. Wilhelm Bacher, well known as one of the most eminent Jewish scholars, and "Pseudo-Messiahs," by Dr. Friedmann. Mr. Joseph Jacobs also gives an instructive account of the house of Rothschild, together with a full pedigree; it is a pretty paradox that at present the Rothschilds are the chief guardians of the Papal treasure. Among the most interesting of the shorter articles are those on "Pilpul," a method of Talmudic study which eventually degenerated into more logic-chopping and sophistry, "Priests," "Poverty," and "Professions." Nearly half a column is devoted to Mr. Pinero, whose real name apparently is Pinheiros, and who is descended from a Sephardic family. As in the preceding volumes, unnecessary space is devoted to illustrations, though we would wish to point to an exception in the case of the many excellent reproductions of Rembrandt's pictures of Jews.

The Book of the Scented Garden, by F. W. Burbidge. (Lane, 2s. 6d. net.) Two good books might be written on Mr. Burbidge's subject. One, by a man amorously learned in ancient floral lore, would be full of what is already known of the scents of leaves and roots and piths and rinds and seeds and flowers: the other would be full of discoveries, and suggestions for other harmonies and symphonies of scents, by some one of curious and adventurous mind and an alert and patient sense that might evoke the divinity of the humblest herb. But Mr. Burbidge could not, after any probable metempsychosis even, write either of these books. We are at loss, indeed, to know how he could have been so rash or unintelligent as to attempt the task. For in this book, at least, he does not prove that he has a sense of smell; of any other necessary sense we find no evidence. His book is unoriginal, unmethodical, without charm, and without use, if we exclude the barren alphabetical list of perfumes at the end. We must remark that he is M.A., V.M.H., F.R.C.S. London, and curator of Trinity College Botanical Gardens, and College Park, Dublin. But we are sure that there are a hundred gardeners in England who would, in a day, say more intelligible, useful, and charming things than Mr. Burbidge has got into a hundred pages. He is full of such remarks as that English literature is "redolent of all the sweetest leaves and flowers of English gardens;" that it remains for a specialist in odours to give us a gamut or scale of all their varieties. In one place, he wants us to believe that this sentence is his own—"Timber for the builder's yard, corn for the granary . . . moss for the grave." On his sense of order we need comment no more than by pointing out that "Chemical Perfumes," "Market Value of Sweet Foliage," "The green Leaf," "Gardens enclosed" (which is unintelligible), make one of his sequences, and that he suddenly inserts a recipe for driving away moths. In one passage, he solemnly asks: "What is odour or perfume?" and tells us that "a very celebrated chemist" once said that it was "a very subtle and unknown quantity." There are the usual and unoriginal recipes for pot pourri, and, we need hardly say, much disconnected and dark information and the usual useless photographs.

Messrs. Duckworth have published in London an obviously American book on *The Tyrol*, by W. D. McCrackan (5s. net). It is printed in America, and the end-papers (*horrescimus referentes*) are maps of the country, in white and green. Still, the book is readable and interesting, and should be especially valuable to people who mean to go to the Tyrol for their summer holidays. It tells briefly and clearly of the historic characters, the Minnesingers, Walther von der Vogelweide and Ostwald von Wolkenstein, Philippine Welser, who married the Archduke Ferdinand in 1557 and has left what the author is allowed to call her "cook-book" in the Court Library at Vienna, Jakob Stainer, the violin-maker and others; and it has a really good account of Andreas Hofer. We do not like "Fair Land Tyrol" (which we suspect of being the American title of the book) for "heil'ge Land Tyrol"; and the work—illustrations and all—is rather useful than beautiful. But travellers would do well to buy it.

Mr. Fisher Unwin has just issued the second edition of Messrs. Coolidge, Duhamel and Perrin's *The Central Alps and the Dauphiny* (Coolidge's Climbers' Guides, 7s. 6d. net). The book was first published in 1892. This edition omits the routes by which the district may be reached, and the names of guides and inns, information which is accessible elsewhere; and the order of the sections has been re-arranged so that those relating to the region (partly in Savoy) to the north of the Col du Lautaret come before those describing the ranges, with their spurs, enclosing the Vénéon valley, which is followed by the region south of the Vallouise and Valgaudemar. For the rest, the book remains what it was: indispensable in presenting clearly a peculiarly complicated piece of topography, and a thoroughly practical guide to climbers.

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printed.—John D. Ballie, Grand Pump Room Library, Bath.

HORNE'S INTRODUCTION TO THE
Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures.
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6s. 6d.—Lloyd & Townsend, 13 Dillwyn Street, Swansea.

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different, 5s. Illustrated London News, ditto. Shaw's
Kentish Dialect, in wrapper, published 10s. 6d., 2s.—W. E.
Goulden, 5 St. Paul's, Canterbury.

HAWKER ON SHOOTING, 9th Edition
(1844), bound blue cloth; publisher, Longman & Co.—
Offers, Mrs. Youngman, 6 Brecknock Road, Camden Road,
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